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# How 'Tis Done.

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A THOROUGH VENTILATION OF THE NUMEROUS SCHEMES  
CONDUCTED BY

## WANDERING CANVASSERS

TOGETHER WITH THE VARIOUS

### ADVERTISING DODGES

FOR THE

SWINDLING OF THE PUBLIC.

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## PREFACE.

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The publishers of this volume are satisfied that it will meet a want long felt. For years designing men have preyed upon the rural sections of the country, draining it of a large proportion of its wealth, as tribute to cunning, lazy canvassing agents and downright criminal swindles of all kinds. These men have become adepts in the business of hatching schemes and setting traps, that are so shrewdly manipulated that their victims are in every community and almost every household in the land. When one project fleeces the people until it is exposed and cannot be worked any longer, they have another to take its place. Every day might be heard the wails of regret and threats of vengeance from duped men and women, who had been made to give up their hard-earned money to pay for something they had no use for, because they did not know the "tricks of the profession."

The methods of catching victims by these individuals have only been told, heretofore, in detached and valueless form in current newspaper literature. We have now for the first time, in this book, a condensed, truthful and reliable expose of the many "dodges" constantly being practiced upon the public, together with the glaring swindles with which the farmer finds himself constantly beset. In these pages is told the story of the origin and development of the county history, atlas and map scheme, which has taken millions of dollars from the farming communities; together with the lightning-rod, patent-right, cloth, mining-stock, patent-medicine, and the thousand other plans resorted to for the purpose of squeezing money from innocent victims. We tell how these things are done, by whom, for what purpose, and the profits realized; and there isn't a farmer or other, who reads these pages carefully, but may in the future defy any glib agent or book canvasser to worm a dollar out of his pocket.

We have placed this book at a low figure in order to give it a large circulation. If we succeed in doing this, the rascally agent and advertising humbug must seek other callings.

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# HOW 'TIS DONE.

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## INTRODUCTORY.

It is the purpose of this volume to treat of that fairly numberless class of canvassers with whom the farmer, and towns-people most especially, are almost daily thrown into contact, and who, roaming from town to town and house to house, have some article to dispose of which they will offer for sale at what may appear to be prices far below current rates. These wares are generally novel in design, attractive in appearance, or seemingly valuable in application to the advertised end. Most of them cannot be purchased through the ordinary channels of trade, being made for the sole purpose of sale by authorized agents, who place them upon the market and reap the financial harvest. It is hardly necessary for us to say, in this connection, that the wares of these peripatetic salesmen are, for the major part, frauds, or, at least, possessed of such trifling merits as to be of no practical use. There is not, probably, a resident of the rural regions who has not been approached by these traveling agents, and knows by bitter experience and dear cost how true are the assertions we have above made.

The "gift of gab," as the common phrase puts it, is one of the prime essentials to success as an agent. The goods are of such a nature that they can only be sold by good talking, careful manipulation, and, in many instances, especially among the honest and confiding classes, it is necessary to practice downright lying, fraud and swindling. The agent, as a class, has no scruples; he stops at nothing; he has his goods to sell, and on them secures a percentage. If he cannot palm them off by simple equivocation and prevarication, should he be cornered he resorts to the most barefaced falsehood or glaring inconsistency.

Reader, can you not bring to your mind just such a plausible, oily-gammon, who came down upon you and your household with a multitude of wares or a special article which you were asked to and finally did purchase, because the fellow proved to you that you could not do without them—that your prosperity and general safety depended upon them? Can't you remember him well? And do you not have a peculiar feeling whenever you think of him? Do not your hands clinch, your teeth become set, your very nature cry out for revenge? Do you not swear for the hundredth time that you will never again permit one of this band to enter upon your premises, or allow yourself to be wheedled into good-natured affiliation with them by means of oily talk or deft manipulation? And how long is it ere you have another article on hand, at large expense, and find that you have been swindled once more?



In nearly every portion of the Eastern, Middle and Western States the people have been made to pay a mighty tribute to the map, atlas and county history schemes. Then in the wake of these have followed the garrulous subscription-book agent, the cheeky and “scientific” lightning-rod canvasser, the army of patent-right sellers, with everything under the sun; the fruit-tree vender, with scrubby brush to be disposed of as valuable nursery stock; the cloth salesman, the jewelry fraud, the patent-medicine humbug—the legion of swindles dexterously disguised under high-sounding titles, and covered with the attractive garb of novelty.

To be sure some of these schemes—to call them by no worse name—have a certain proportion of merit, and some canvassers are good men, and no doubt work honestly and conscientiously. But these instances are so few that they are almost completely swallowed up or lost sight of by the well known impositions, and the result is that the entire class of agents are by the public included in the one sweeping category of swindlers, frauds and rascals. For years we have labored to gather the facts relating to the operations of these men who live by disposing of their wares in the rural districts, and our object in this volume is to separate the chaff from the wheat, the wolves from the sheep.

It should be understood by every person upon whom the canvasser practices his art, that success is made dependent upon patient study of the foibles of human

nature. Every canvasser or agent is schooled to the work he has in hand. It thus becomes a science. Every possible weakness of human nature, every loophole of ignorance, every assailable point where vantage may be gained, is studied with utmost care; and thus it is that new schemes are constantly being conjured up whereby each new opening of gullibility may be entered, each new weakness attacked. No one should suppose for an instant that these schemes are spontaneous in origin. Wily men are constantly studying up new ways whereby they may fleece the public of its hard earnings.

So completely are these agents armed, so skillful of maneuver, so shrewd, so well versed in human nature, that they capture their victim before he is fairly aware of his condition or that an insidious attack was being made upon him.

It is no more than right that the parties who are almost daily beset by this enemy should know the cause of the constant charges, and have a weapon placed in their hands whereby they may defend themselves, and which may aid them in securing a victory over the very ones who have heretofore been the conquerors.

We are confident that this book will just serve this important end. The information which these pages contain regarding the schemes constantly practiced upon the farmer, will enable all who are usually made the victims of such frauds to meet the so-called agents single-handed and vanquish them. Exposing, as we do, the manner in which these swindles are worked,

and giving therewith wholesome advice, the mode of defense best calculated to win a victory, or, at least, repulse assault, is thus in the possession of every farmer of the land. If he will read these pages carefully, he will have his eyes opened to a condition of things he was never aware of before, and be made acquainted with the fact of the general prevalence of dishonesty, of which he has for a long time been made the unsuspecting victim; for it is a fact that in the farming community the harvests are reaped.

We felicitate ourselves on the belief that it will be the means of starving out every rascally agent, and thus save to every community, annually, enormous sums of money.

It may, perhaps, be conceded that a mutual benefit accrues when an agent succeeds in securing the signature of a leading business man of any section to an atlas or a county history. But when that agent goes to a poor farmer, or mechanic, or other laboring man, with scarcely enough accruing from his labor to secure the necessities of life, and wheedles that man into putting down his name and binding himself to pay \$15 for an atlas, when the same man is too poor to pay even \$1 for a dictionary, or \$1 a year for a newspaper; when such things are done—and they are of frequent occurrence—we do contend that this energetic agent has taken from that subscriber's family money that should go for other purposes. By fair words, plausible argument, and careful playing upon the sympathies and pride of the victim, that agent has simply

genteelly and dexterously, and within the law, put his hand into that man's pocket and robbed him in spite of his inward protestations. And what is the man to do? Submit. There is no redress.

This is no exceptional thing. Poor people are thus imposed upon every day, and such a transaction is, with the canvassing fraternity, a victory only equaled by "capturing" an Irishman, an Israelite, or a miser. This they consider the height of their ambition, and over which they congratulate themselves greatly.

There is no getting around the fact that there is a natural desire in men and women to do as their neighbors do. If the neighbor who can afford it buys a new carpet, the poor woman feels it rankling in her heart because she cannot put on the same appearance of prosperity. When a book, or map, or atlas canvasser comes along and shows the names of this or that person, who, perhaps, has ample wealth to afford it, the poorer man at once feels that it will make a good impression if his name goes along with the rest, and that he will get the credit of being better off than people may have imagined. Then another inducement may be the fact that pay-day is so far off, and that they will not be asked for the money for several months. This, apparently, makes it frequently much easier than it otherwise would be. But it is not. It takes just as much money in the end, money which the poor man cannot afford to pay, for such wares at least.

The general plan of operations in all these schemes is the same; the agents, however, resort to an occa-



sional change of tactics to suit the emergencies of particular cases. They readily discern every peculiarity of their intended victims, and take advantage of them so dexterously that it is almost impossible to ward them off. Atlas men work upon the vanity of the public; book men hold up the attractive bait of pictorial contents, and set forth the fact that the world is simply going crazy over the particular work they may be selling, and finally bear down with incessant palaver until there is no way of getting rid of them except by a subscription. Patent-rights men resort to cunning, and unfold visions of wealth, and thereby extort notes of hand for the right to use or sell, or take contracts which are transformed into notes, and which must be paid, no matter how much the swindled party may object.

Then there are the lightning-rod agents. People are often frightened into signing blind contracts full of hidden catches, which these agents present to them for their wares. The agent works upon their fears. This is a common and favorite dodge. He sets forth in vivid language the necessity for such protection against the elements, and pictures the stormy night, the family slumbering peacefully and unsuspectingly in their beds, the cattle and horses in their stalls, when suddenly comes the vivid flash of lightning, and then the burning building! As you listen to the recital you wish you had the means of averting such a terrible calamity which the agent assures you is likely to come at any moment, and you find that

you secretly desire to put your name down on his books and contract with him to put the rods on your buildings. When that shrewd agent was detailing to you all the terrible results of elemental strife, he didn't for a moment apprehend you to be in any danger, and, moreover, knew that the article he was selling would do you little good were you fortified with a dozen of them; in fact, that you were in just about as much danger with the rods on as with them off. But he did know one thing, which was that when he was talking you into a frenzy on the matter of lightning, he was at the same time assessing you ten times the value of the rod he proposed selling you. That is, he was on the face of it making the bait more attractive by covertly talking of a very small sum, when, he knew very well it would not begin to cover the expense to which the shrewd and "catching" contract would eventually put the unlucky purchaser.

This is but one instance—a sample of the swindles which came under the notice of every man who will read this book. It is to such cases and all their kindred that we propose devoting these pages.

There is another class. Agents going about the country have been known to go to farmers and give them the agency for some patent machine. The pretext is that they want the farmer to use the machine in getting in his crops so that his neighbors may see it in operation. Then he prevails upon the farmer to sign a few papers, agreeing to give the profits of his first year's sales to the patentees. In the end it

turns out that the papers signed were legal notes of hand, which are, of course, disposed of to innocent or third parties, and the signer must stand the collection. There is no escape.

We find also that the swindling tree-agent is abroad in the land. Where is the inhabitant of rural districts, especially, who has not been approached by this individual? And how many are there who can tell a pitiful story of the manner in which they have been imposed upon? The fruit-tree business was once conducted on a legitimate plan. But it has come to pass that a reputable nursery can hardly compete with the rascally agents of inferior concerns. The few honest men canvassing for fruit-trees have to contend with such obstacles that it is difficult to understand how they manage to maintain themselves.

An agent will visit your farm and represent that he is soliciting orders for an established nursery firm, and sell you "carefully planted and cultivated" trees, and then deliver them at a time when their condition cannot be detected. In many instances, the purchaser in the end finds that he has on hand a lot of worthless brush that will never bear fruit. He has been duped by these rascals. We propose to make plain in these pages the manner in which these canvassers operate, that they may be avoided and the country saved many thousands of dollars.

There are other points which we have enlarged upon in this book, and which are of great importance. We may, in a passing word, enumerate the cloth

swindle, the patent-medicine humbug, quack doctors, fraudulent seeds, lotteries, gift-concerts, advertising swindles, cheap jewelry, and a score of other ends resorted to by designing men to get money out of the public. Our aim is to lay bare their many rascalities which are practiced daily ; and we are satisfied we have accomplished that end. We are sure the effort made will be appreciated not only by those who have suffered, but by the public at large, which is laid under tribute by canvassers of all kinds and is liable to be imposed upon at any moment. Where is the county or community in the United States where this thing has not been done ? It is putting it very mildly when we say that as a class these men steal from the people. They steal from them under the pretext of doing them a kindly office. They steal from them while pretending to give them value received for their money. They steal from them the money they can ill afford to part with.

It is high time a stop was put to these operations ; and if the public will act upon the suggestions of these pages we are confident the desired end will be reached and the agents and frauds of every description, like the jealous Moor, find at last their occupation gone.



## ORIGIN OF THE COUNTY MAP BUSINESS.

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About thirty years ago, two students, who were attempting to work their way through a New England college, and were engaged in the engrossing study of civil engineering, conceived a brilliant plan. Their daily practice as surveyors and draftsmen suggested the idea of turning their labor to practical account by making maps of the more populous communities, which was done by hand, in India ink, and selling them to township officials and others, who actually needed them in business. Boundaries, surveyor's lines, streams and farmhouses were placed in accurate positions on these plats, and every distinguishing feature in the physical geography of the section was clearly marked.

The distances were ascertained by means of the odometer—then a novelty in that region. The instrument has since become a familiar one to most farmers, because of its introduction into nearly every county in the United States. It consists of an apparatus resembling a wheelbarrow, upon which is perched a clock-like piece of mechanism. The instrument is wheeled over the roads, and, by the revolution of the wheel, which is mathematically constructed, a record of the distance traversed is made by the “clock,” and

shown on the dial. This strange affair naturally provoked a vast amount of curiosity among the country people, who would stop work and carefully inspect its construction. Meanwhile, the operator would harangue to them upon the importance of the work he was doing and the absolute certainty of his getting everything just as it should be on his proposed map. The plan proved a grand advertisement to the young New England students, and they soon saw the impossibility of filling orders with maps made by hand. They began work with no expectation of carrying it on as a business, but speedily found themselves forced into a larger trade than they had anticipated. They saw that, if they could get their maps engraved and could cover a greater area of territory, the business was one of profit.

The odometer was the key to their success. It was a cheap, but effective, advertising medium. Advertising is the life of ventures of this nature; that is to say, the people must be aroused to the fact that Mr. A. or Mr. B. has something to sell which the public not only may, but really should, buy—in fact, which the public cannot get along without—and their curiosity to know just what it is must be so played upon as to insure sales. In those days, when the two students began map-making, advertising had not been reduced to science as it is to-day. The field of speculation was broad and verdant. The public was no more willing to be humbugged then than now; but the methods were easier for the operators, and the returns far more profitable.



THE ODOMETER.



There are certain rules which govern humanity, and especially rural humanity. The most noticeable of them is the disposition to do as some one prominent citizen does—to follow the lead of the bellwether of the flock. Another marked tendency is for a man to try to drag his neighbor into a suspicious venture after he has got there himself. These characteristics the man with the odometer soon perceived; that when he could get a well-known citizen interested enough to examine the instrument, he was almost certain to obtain his order in some way. That name, probably, added scores of others to the lists. Thus, the fellow trundled his “clock on a wheelbarrow” over the country, creating a local excitement as he went through staid New England, canvassing and advertising at the same time, and with little trouble or expense. His chief points of argument were the accuracy of his survey, as could be seen by the strange and incomprehensible machine before him, and the magnitude and expense of the undertaking then on foot. Besides this, but as a secondary matter, he urged upon the people the advantages derived from having such a map in the house. The work stood upon its own merits, and if the people failed to secure so invaluable an article the fault rested solely at their own doors. To add to the prosperity of the enterprise, the country chosen by the mappers was an uneven one, where roads meandered through all sorts of hilly passes, and where but few surveys had ever been made, except by metes and bounds. Distances had not been esti-



mated and no reliable record of the roads had ever been made.

The business of mapping was soon large enough to warrant the platting of townships and the engraving of the maps. Then followed

#### MAPS OF COUNTIES,

which were usually gotten up on the scale of one inch to the mile, or Congressional townships six inches square.

Although the business grew under the careful management of those men, it must not be inferred that all was clear sailing. The country was not much like the fertile West. Those farmers who lived there and literally picked out a living from between the cobblestones were loath to part with a \$5 goldpiece for a map. The masses belonged to the class who grew well-to-do off of a twenty-acre patch of so much of a hillside as the rains had not washed into the valleys. They gathered even the berries and nuts from their "farms" and sold them. They sold butter by the single pound and eggs by the single dozen. While their curiosity was as deeply excited as need be over the appearance of the "wheelbarrow man," as he tramped slowly along under the burden of his surveyor's instruments, heaped high on his shoulders (for effect only), the hard-earned dollars were carefully retained and the coveted map was more frequently left unbought.

How different was the spirit of the succeeding generation! The scanty fortunes left by the frugal farmers of New England found resting-places in the broad

and productive farms of the West. With the change from the little homesteads of the East to the greater and more profitable farms of Illinois and Iowa, came, also, a broadening of the minds of the people. We are all creatures of habit and education, influenced both by force of circumstances and the more involuntary effects of surroundings. The sons of the careful New Englanders grew accustomed to measuring their possessions by section lines and counting their grain-fields by the mile. The tedious way of grubbing and clearing land in the East had been succeeded by the monster "breaking-teams" of cattle; the grain-drill had superseded hand-sowing; the corn-planter had crowded out the hoe, and the ten-horse thresher had forever hung the monotonous flail upon the barn walls to be gazed at as a curious relic of the past. The sulky plow came before the farming public as a candidate for favor, and steam-power became a necessary adjunct of the mammoth institutions of the West. The world was broadened in every sense, and the farmers became a part of the general scheme of advancement. Progression was the watchword. Every overture made in the name of improvement was greedily accepted.

#### COUNTY MAPS IN THE WEST.

At this stage of the public proceedings, the Western map men enter the arena.

Human nature is the same the world over, and can everywhere be relied upon to perform like acts under

like circumstances. The rich farmers had better farms than their progenitors had in the East, and were better able to assume pecuniary liabilities; but they were just as curious and much more reckless in their curiosity, as were their fathers of old when the well-worn odometer made a sudden appearance on their roads.

The wiseacres in money-making schemes in the East predicted failure for those who proposed to map the West. The sales were made in the East because they interested the people on account of the unevenness of the country and irregularity of the roads. But in the new West the country was so level, the farms so large and uniform and the lines so straight, that the farmers would not buy maps. They could be of no earthly use to them, and it was asserted that the New England penuriousness still clung to the scions of the original house. They did not think that the scheme would be accepted in the West as an advertisement of that growing region, and that the desire to make known the advantages of the country would be used as a capital by the map men.

Notwithstanding these prophecies of failure—which, it will be observed, were made in every case of departure from some old scheme—the map men began operations.

The settlers in towns and country were able to pay for a map, and there remained only the task of preparing that highly essential article of household furniture to convince them that they could not live with-

out it. The average man, if he has money in his purse, can easily be persuaded that he should buy whatever is offered, provided his mind is first operated on through the channels of curiosity and personal vanity.

Those grand avenues through which the army of canvassers invades society and penetrates even the most sacred domestic circles are open constantly. There are no guards to give alarm or word of attacking parties, if the assault is properly conducted. Tickle the fancy of the strongest man; awake his momentary interest in your subject by some appeal to his sense of curiosity; probe his nature until he reveals his weakness, as he is sure to do; then stroke his vanity with delicate touch, and the work is done. He will carry home a mass of stuff of no earthly value to him, while he is impenetrable to the demands of his household for many a useful article. He will subscribe for books that are worthless in every particular; he will fill his hall with maps that are never looked at; cover his buildings with lightning-rods; plant his orchards with bogus fruit-trees, and lumber his garret with patented articles that are not worth storage-room, if the adroit canvasser is but keen enough to reach his tender spot and coddle his pet theory.

#### THE METHODS USED TO PROCURE SUBSCRIPTIONS.

The question to be first decided in the map and book business is, What method is the most certain of success through its appeal to the greatest number?



While each individual has his weakness, there are still some failings that are universal; what are they? First of all is that overpowering bit of egotism—a desire to see one's name in print. It is as broad and far-reaching as the boundaries of civilization, and is as certain in its operation as the laws of heat and light. Upon it is based the success of maps, atlases and histories; and no abuse of it by publishers will ever destroy its potency or impair the field for speculators.

The odometer claims the attention of the public for an instant, but that time is sufficient to impart the knowledge that John Smith and Richard Roe will occupy a conspicuous place on the glazed surface of the wonderful draught. The distinction thus accorded them lures them on to subscribe for the work, without their stopping to think that hundreds of other names will appear in equal prominence. Many of them, long before the map is delivered, find out their mistake, but it is then too late to retreat. Their names are down in black and white, and no law in the land relieves them of the responsibility, but, rather, compels them to the fulfillment of their contract. Their house may need repairing; their cooking-stove may need replacing; their children may need clothes or schoolbooks, and the money thrown away on an article they have no use for might have gone far toward helping out. Still, the sensible words of the good wife, offered in protest, serve only to aggravate the case, and the victim finds no alternative but to sink

his money from sight in the pocket of the man who delivers the article. Many a man who has felt too poor to put up a good farm-gate, and save his crops or orchard from damage; who has gone half a mile for water during many a long year, because he could not afford to dig a well, and who has let his outbuildings drop down from lack of needed repairs, has expended scores of dollars in just this useless way. His name in type was the bait that caught him.

We will go from general matters to more personal ones, and speak of actual occurrences in detail. In 1864, Capt. T. H. Thompson, of Geneva, Ill., who had been interested with his brothers in the map business in the West prior to the war, returned from the army and began operations in Dubuque Co., Iowa. His re-entrance in the field was the

#### BEGINNING OF THE BUSINESS ON A MAMMOTH SCALE.

During the long days of comparative idleness in camp, he had carefully considered the matter and had concluded to dispense with the old-fashioned odometer plan of work; that had become too well known. When a flash advertising scheme is once fully understood by the people, it loses its value. New dodges must be resorted to before the old ones begin to lag. With this fact in mind, Capt. Thompson conceived the idea of "making the surveys" from observation—that is, to copy the plats from the official records, and add roads, streams, timber-lands, etc., by the eye as he drove over the country in a buggy, and engrossing the

attention of farmers by personal interview. From the buggy could be seen for miles around him, and from the intelligent settlers he could gather all the information needed in the preparation of the map, thus obviating the expense of a genuine survey. Instead of having surveyors to do the canvassing, he employed men especially for that purpose. These men were noted in the "profession" for three qualities—cheek, nerve and endurance. They were "stayers" in the vernacular of the business. They were men who did not expect much pay from their employer, but who literally lived by their wits. They had a faculty of generally living without cost in the country, as they satisfied the farmer that he would be doing an act of public benefaction by keeping them and their teams "gratis;" and at hotels they got bottom prices.

## THOMPSON &amp; EVERTS.

In the fall of 1865, Capt. Thompson formed a co-partnership with his fellow-townsmen and old army associate, Maj. L. H. Everts. By this time, Dubuque County was well along, and Jones County had been invaded. The Major was remarkably well adapted to the work thus entered upon. The sole obstacle in the way of his prospering was his impaired health. He was smart, active, genial, penetrating in his observation, sanguine of success, enthusiastic, and an unusually good judge of human nature. He knew at a glance how to approach a man, and was able to dis-



cover the soft spot in his head in an instant. He always left his victim feeling in excellent humor with himself and satisfied that no one had ever before fully realized what a capital fellow he was. But Everts almost always carried away in his pocket the gentleman's signature for a map.

The Major's object was to become perfectly familiar with the business in all its minutest details, and by personal experience. He first canvassed in the rural regions, and then took up the towns, which require much better management because of the wider business experience of the men. Farmers are always seen by themselves, when no one is by to interfere with the canvasser. They are usually "worked up" away from their families. He plays upon their egotistic nature with as firm a hand as possible until he ascertains how vain they are, and then he bears down until the simple-minded man believes that the work is undertaken solely to aggrandize him and let the world know what a great man he is. The true canvasser never lets his man go until the coveted signature is down in the fatal book. When that is secured, he bids the fellow a hasty good-by and rushes off to find a fresh subject. But in town the work is different. Business men are usually found at their stores and offices, surrounded by customers and friends. It takes a peculiar adroitness to catch them; but they can be caught, and the Major knew how. His plan was to approach a man with sufficient deference to insure his attention, gain control of the man by a few well-chosen words of



flattery or approval, and close the whole matter before the victim of a genial smile really understood what was going on.

Canvassing among business men, as has been observed, was not thought of until Maj. Everts introduced the matter; at least, the idea of carrying on a regular crusade was original with him. Whenever a map could be sold to a real estate man or a county officer, of course that was done from the beginning; but the brass of the first mappers was not equal to the task of forcing their wares on all business men. Everts saw a new field, and a good one, to work upon, and he carefully studied up their case. He learned his speech about how useful the map would be to merchants; to teach them just where their customers lived and how much property they owned. When that failed, he would attack them on the general enterprise plan—telling them that they ought to patronize so grand a scheme just for the sake of encouraging it; it was a home affair, and, as such, was entitled to support. That argument and many others of a similar nature usually won. The men would be blinded for a moment by confusing a map of their county, which was gotten up by outside parties, with a local matter that would keep the money invested therein at home. Everts used to enlarge upon the amount expended and the benefit that the people would derive from it, when the truth is that the map business is like a traveling show: it takes a vast deal of money out of the county and leaves but a pit-

tance in return. When Everts canvassed Jackson County, Iowa, he got lists fully three times as large as was expected; but all that while he was pleading the expense of getting out so large a number and the likelihood of having to abandon the territory because of non-profit.

A shrewd scheme that struck him was,

#### GETTING OFFICIALLY INDORSED.

By obtaining an official approval of the map, Maj. Everts expected to greatly improve his sales and make a much finer profit. To this end, he induced the Board of Supervisors to buy a map for each county and township officer, and to sign a personal recommendation of the work. This letter he published in each of the local newspapers.

#### NEWSPAPERS SECURED.

It is stated as a fact that, during three years of this business, the Major paid but two newspapers for advertising his scheme. All other papers were persuaded that the enterprise was one of such public benefit that it was their duty to give free space to all matter he desired inserted! This fact illustrates the point already made herein, that all people are gullible, and that it requires but a keen perception to ascertain the method of "working" them. The press—that self-boastful power—was as foolish as the simplest farmer in the land. The wool was pulled over the

eyes of the editors, by one means or another, and the map men raked in the ducats gained through free advertising. Had the smart editors understood that the business could not have proceeded without their aid, and that Maj. Everts would have paid any price rather than excite unfavorable comment, the situation would have been changed. But that knowledge was not among their store of wisdom, and they may now read of their greenness when it is too late to help themselves. If any of those newspaper men who "aided a good cause" by enriching Maj. Everts ten years ago, ever feel disposed to sneer at the foolishness of a "bunkoed granger," let them remember the days of their own folly, and remain silent

By the time Jackson County was in the hands of the engraver, Thompson & Everts had studied the workings of the business, and found that there were certain strong points that must be closely adhered to. Their plans were about as follows :

#### GETTING LIGHTNING CANVASSERS.

As the map business was of that nature that the cost fell on the first few hundred copies—after which the margin for profit was very large—they must manage to procure as large a list as possible. It was seen that if Maj. Everts had canvassed the whole county they would have made, probably, three times the profit they were likely to ; so, then, the first thing was to secure what is termed in the business "lightning

men." In those days, few good men were out of employment, and most men who were adapted to being successful canvassers were ashamed to be what were termed "map-peddlers," and Thompson & Everts had not much hopes of securing the class of men they desired. With the improvements they had found to be advantageous in those counties just completed, they thought best to try a section of country not so new, where they could find more wealth, a greater population and better improvements.

#### CHANGE OF BASE.

In the spring of 1867, they set out for Knox County, Ill., which was the center of probably the most desirable section of Illinois. They went in teams, by way of Davenport, in order to visit a brother of Thompson's and an old army friend, A. T. Andreas. They were struck with the beauties of Scott County as they passed through it. It was densely populated, and with the very best classes. At Davenport, T. & E., in their characteristic way, explained to some of the prominent men their plan, and, of course, immediately secured their warmest support. They visited Rock Island, across the river, and met with the same reception there.

The shape of Scott and Rock Island Counties together would make a square map, and so it was determined to combine the two. Neither of the Boards of Supervisors were in session, and as the



prominent citizens were enthusiastic over their plan of making county maps, they conceived the brilliant idea of getting their indorsement. The publication of county maps has a great advantage over any other project which requires the support of the masses.

#### GETTING PROMINENT CITIZENS TO INDORSE THEM.

It is a necessity to certain classes in their business, such as officials, lawyers, bankers, real estate dealers, etc., and a great assistance to many others having relations with farmers or dealing in lands. These men are the most prominent generally, and readily subscribe; and, undoubtedly, if the success of the map was in jeopardy, would give a large bonus, because it is to them nearly of as much value as a plow to a farmer. So, when the Major asked them, they signed a document saying a county map was a public necessity and they hoped every citizen would assist in the most important home enterprise that had been projected, and, of course, set the firm out as being one of the best and most responsible in existence; at the same time, none of them had ever heard of Thompson & Everts before. But about one hundred of the best citizens of those two counties signed it. This document was published in all the newspapers. The effect was that the public had unlimited faith in the scheme, and thought that when such "big guns" called "to help," they must do so.

This plan was made a prominent feature in their future work. They would enlist a few of the prominent men in a county by getting them anxious to have a map, and then pretend they were going to give the project up on account of being afraid of not getting support enough, which would end in producing this remarkable indorsement. When once a few had signed it, class No. 2 would sign and scarcely read it, because it was a list of the prominent men and was to be published in the papers. The real point to be gained was, that any man signing that document and it was published, could not be so inconsistent as not to subscribe for a publication they had so strongly indorsed and asked every public-spirited citizen to patronize. So, in going into a section to canvass, the first thing was to go to these men in a matter-of-course kind of a way, and, with a little of the right kind of talk, get their subscriptions. In this way, every man had the best men of the section to head his list. As these men were "in for it," they would so "post" the canvasser that he could make a pretty clean sweep.

#### ADDITIONAL "POINTS" TO WORK ON.

The next big card was locating orchards and springs. The object of this was to show a man the great interest taken in the minutest details; and, after showing him the great expense in getting out the work by making surveys, down, even, to locating a man's spring and orchard, he could shame a man to subscribe if he

could not argue him into it. It is a fact that a great many of the subscribers expected a regular surveyor, with chain and compass, making an actual survey of his entire farm. How must he have felt when he saw or heard of a man riding along in a buggy in fine style, stop a moment in front of his house, make a dot on his plat, and drive on, and would make the entire surveys of an average township in three days?

The press, by publishing articles as original which were written by map men, tells the people that it is a disgrace to the county to allow the matter to fall through at that stage of the game, and fairly whips them into support of it. This second dose of free advertising spurs the public on, and the canvassers urge forward the branch of business in their charge. It is fatal to have territory grow "cold." The game must be bagged before it has a chance to fly far. One of the tricks introduced is that of telling a desirable subscriber that there are so many Irish in one part of the county and so many Bohemians in another who never never patronize a good work, that the profits of the map will be absolutely nothing. This talk convinces many that the business is actually carried on at a loss. It is a part of every map or book agent's business to assert the unprofitableness of the enterprise. If the "white men" show any hesitation about subscribing, the agents tell them that they have orders to leave the field at once, and thereby deprive the county of the greatest blessing that has ever been proposed in that region.

They are assured that it will be a year, at least, before the work is delivered. This putting off pay-day is a big card. Most men who are hard up think that they will be better off in a year, and subscribe, with a blind trust in luck. Such a trust as that usually proves blind enough before the debt is paid.

#### THE CANVASSER'S "PIECE."

What farmer in all this broad West has not heard the canvasser's gentle voice? Let us picture the scene: The time is morning; the owner of this fine farm is seen coming out of his house and starting for the barn. A well-dressed young man rides into the yard and politely accosts the farmer. The following conversation ensues:

*Canvasser*—Good morning sir! Mr. Jones, I presume? Mr. Jones, you, undoubtedly, have heard through your neighbors, or seen mentioned in the newspapers, that there is an effort now being made to get up a farm map of Jackson County. Of course it is very uncertain whether or not it will be published, and all we are doing now is to make a preliminary canvass, to see if we can meet with the necessary support to go on and survey the county. As I said before, it is very doubtful, since your county is new and there is a large foreign element here, which never patronizes anything that requires intelligent and public-spirited aid in order to be successful. If we should succeed, it will take us a year to get it up. Our plans



are, to work a year and carefully survey all the farms in the county, locating towns, villages, streams, timber, roads, railroads, houses, churches, schoolhouses, blacksmith-shops, quarries, coal-lands, and even down to showing your orchards and springs. It will be mounted on cloth, have a roller, be bound with tape on the edges, colored by townships, with two rows of beautiful, large lithographic pictures of your finest buildings surrounding the townships; with rings to hang it by; will be about six feet square; and the whole—if we meet with support enough to complete it—for only \$6, and you don't have to pay a cent for it until it is hung in your house. As I said before, Mr. Jones, it is very doubtful if we can find enough intelligent men to warrant this outlay; but if we do, I suppose you, like your neighbor, Mr. Smith, would like us to bring you one, of course. Mr. Brown, of Maquoketa, has ordered six; Mr. Jenkins, the same number, and a great many have ordered extra copies for the purpose of sending them East to be hung in public places, so as to induce men to locate in this section. There are many people now considering the subject of moving West, and a few of these maps, judiciously distributed throughout the East, will return large profits in the way of securing a heavy immigration to Jackson County. I will just read you what a magnificent reception our work has met with since I came into your township. (Here the canvasser reads the list of subscribers secured.) You see it is a clean sweep among the intelligent and wealthy men. I wish

that all the men on our force had met with the same support that I have. But, you see, this is the best township in the county in point of intelligence. (Here the canvasser slips his subscription-book, with lead-pencil, under the farmer's nose, and tells him to "sign right there.") Your community is one of the most prosperous and highly cultivated I have seen in the State. (By this time Jones has signed his name.) Thank you, sir. I shall be more than delighted to bring you, some time next year, a beautiful map of your charming county. You will be surprised to find just how much comfort you and your family will derive from the study of this map, provided we get support enough to issue it. Let me see, Mr. Jones, who lives in the next house? (Here the canvasser gets an idea of how to manage his next victim, by a few well-put questions, and starts off on his mission of "benefiting the county.")

The canvasser drives a good turn-out, for much depends on the first impressions made by him on the proposed subscriber.

#### THE PICTURES.

Before the Jones County work was out, the Major realized that the picture part of the business could be greatly improved. Views of buildings had been placed on the margin of the maps in limited numbers and at no profit. He had canvassed for the views, and saw that, by proper manipulation, a much larger price could be pro-

cured, and all could be secured that could possibly find place on the margin of the map; thus, under the plea of ornamenting the map with the fine buildings, could be secured a large source of revenue and profit. The cost of producing the plate, making the so-called surveys and placing the map on the market was as great for a small number as for a large one—the only additional expense in extensive additions was the actual cost of materials, the mounting and the cost of collecting.

Every man who owned a fine farm-building, a store or hotel or block, thought it was a grand thing to place a view of it on the map. The “piece” spoken by the canvasser for views, or by the “viewer,” as he is technically called, ran about as follows, when with a farmer:

#### THE VIEWER'S PIECE.

“Good morning, sir! Mr. Jones, I believe? I am connected with the proposed map of Jackson County that we have been, for several months past, getting up.”

The farmer generally remarked: “So you have got subscribers enough to go ahead, have you?” To which the viewer would reply that they had, and that the list far exceeded the expectations of the publishers.

“Our list is about completed, and we now number nearly every intelligent and enterprising man in the

county on our books. Now, Mr. Jones, I am selecting a very few of the finest buildings with which to embellish our map. We shall make an ornamental border about the map, using the views as a specially interesting subject, while at the same time they give a degree of reality to the map that nothing else can impart. We shall select only enough to encircle the townships, choosing the most noticeable residences, mills and manufactories in the towns, and then give the farmers a chance to appear side by side with such evidences of local prosperity by taking about a dozen or more views of farm property. We want only such as will leave a good impression abroad where the map circulates outside the county. Here, the leading farmers are all known, and the fact of your being one of the wealthiest men is an established one; but it is for the general interest of the county that we now offer you a chance to improve the standing of Jackson County. We shall offer this opportunity to a few leading man in every part of the county. Our plan is, to have an artist of acknowledged ability visit you, Mr. Jones—in case you accept—and make the drawings from nature. In this way, any changes or improvements you may contemplate making in the future can be made in the sketch just as you may dictate, and appear in proper form in the years to come, after you have carried out your plans. For instance, you would want that pile of wood near your house left out of the sketch, and the rubbish about the back-yard, which you are about to cart off, should not appear. You



had better have a picket fence in front, instead of those rails, as you undoubtedly will have a picket fence there some day. It will only be necessary for you to tell the artist what sort of a picket you prefer, and the thing will be properly done. I would put a pump in that well, and make your barn a little larger. Of course we can make your house look as though it had just been painted, and we can put a grass lawn in front. A few evergreen trees would look well. In fact, just think up what improvements you design having, and we will have the sketch made giving you just such a house and yard as you will probably have three or four years from this time. We will then have the picture engraved and will place it on the map." (Here the viewer shows a miniature plan of the map, with spaces blocked out for each view. Names have been written on most of them, showing that the chances are nearly all gone, and also exhibits his carefully selected assortment of samples, and in every case he has a view which resembles very closely the place of Mr. Jones.)

The man selects his space beside some rich neighbor, and tells the canvasser to be sure and have a good artist make the sketch. The matter of cost has never been broached. The farmer has been so dazzled by the prospect of seeing his farm so prominently and beautifully represented that he has not considered the expense of the matter. He chuckles to himself as he thinks how the town folks will stare when they see his view, and how envious his less fort-



unate neighbors will become. He beholds a magnificent villa rising from the shadows of his old, dilapidated house and barn, and mentally resolves on just what orders he will give the artist who is thus placed under his control.

While the farmer is thus building castles in the air, the canvasser gently touches on the subject of price, somewhat after this manner: "Of course, Mr. Jones, you see what an immense cost this must be, but it is the only occasion of your life when you will be called upon to aid so important a work. The field once gone over can never be surveyed again. For this reason we wish to do the matter right and place only representative views on the map, thereby giving prominence to only the best names in the county. To give you an idea of the magnitude of this work, we will show you the actual items of expense for this view. The sketching costs us \$13.50; the engraving, \$19.00, and the printing and paper, \$3.50 more, making a total of \$36.00 right out of pocket. Of course we have to throw in a great many of the smaller items of expense and charge them to the general bills, but the special additional cost to us of each one of these views is \$36.00. Our only means of profit is in the few extra maps we shall sell by reason of the views. We will have some of your pictures printed on fine paper, to use as samples, and will throw you in twenty-five extra ones free of charge. These are just the thing for framing for parlor decoration and to give as handsome presents to your friends in the East. Now, I

don't say that all of the finest residences will be represented on the map, Mr. Jones; but I do say that, for years to come, the ones shown by us will be regarded as the representative places in the county. I don't undertake to show you that you will actually get your investment back in dollars and cents; but I do say that there are numerous instances where men have sold their property at an immense advance after having secured so valuable an advertisement of their places as this view will be. It creates a favorable impression respecting the farms here exhibited. Another point that is worth remembering is, that no one makes a penny out of this but yourself. You derive all the benefit that is derived by any one. It will be a constant pleasure to yourself to see your farm so nicely improved. Your family and friends will be pleased at the surprise you can make them when you get your extra views for framing. What is the use of working hard and saving money unless we can enjoy ourselves occasionally? and I put squarely to you: How can you gratify yourself and family more than by having a view of your homestead placed where time cannot take the view of it from your posterity. The history of all such fine places as yours is, that when the owner passes away, there not being enough to give it to any one of your children without robbing the rest, the property is divided and the old home is sold. Then the children regret that they have not saved a view of the homestead as a reminder of the happy days spent there. You children will cherish the view with an increasing love for

it, and they will always thank you for your forethought in having it preserved in lasting form. Some one of your numerous children may become a prominent personage, and the birthplace of that child will be engraved and printed in works of lasting history. In less than a century, your house will have been leveled to the ground, and nothing will remain to mark the once happy abiding-place of a household. Is it not your duty to preserve, while now you may, the semblance of the home of your children? We shall issue some 1,500 maps of Jackson County, and on each one of them will be imprinted the view of your beautiful place. They will last for generations, and be a constant source of joy to all who see them. Your name will never be forgotten."

The bewildered and flattered farmer falls a prey to the glib tongue of the canvasser, and, before he realizes what he is doing, he signs the following contract:

\$————

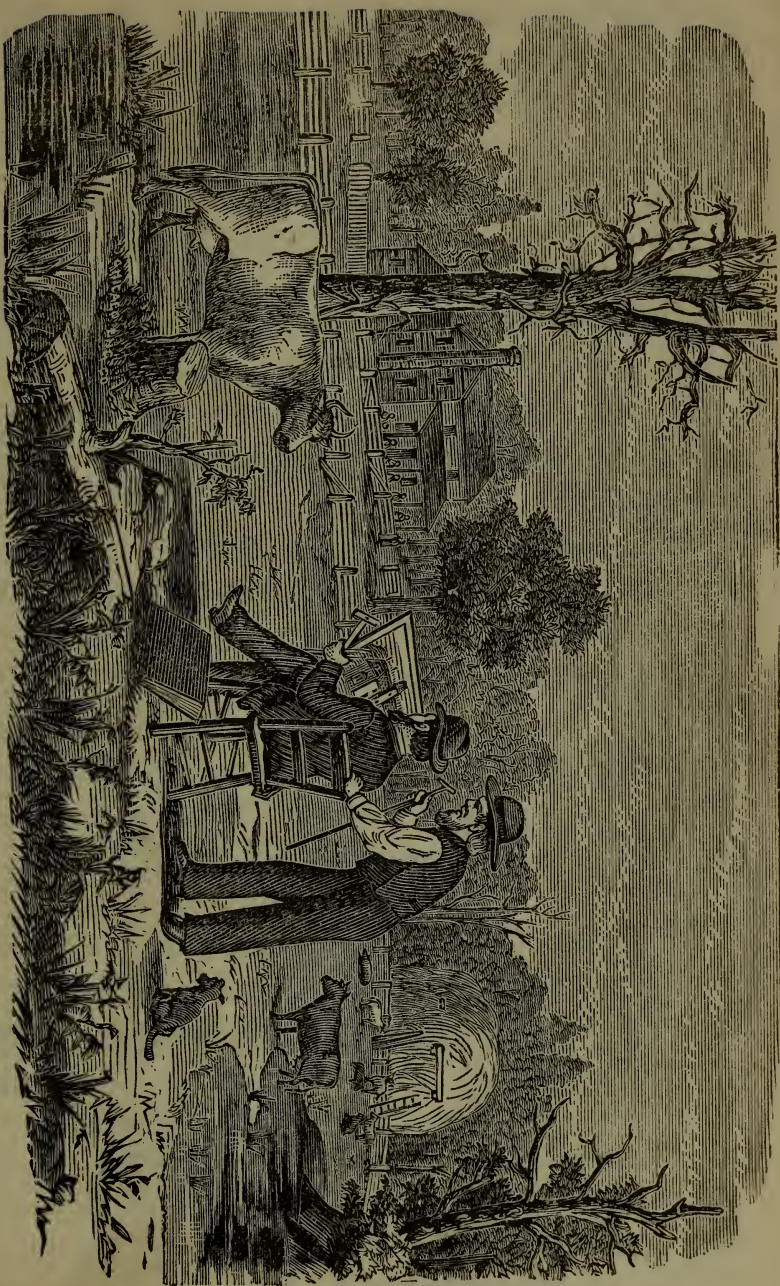
————, 18—

For and in consideration for having a — inch lithographic view of my ——— printed on the map of ——— County, ———, I promise to pay Thompson & Everts the sum of \$————. Payment to be made in cash on making of design, draft or sketch.

P. O. address. ———.

The reader will notice the clause, "payment to be made on completion of design, draught or sketch." A few days after the canvasser gets this contract, a "sketcher" puts in an appearance. He takes a seat





ARTIST MAKING PICTURE TO SUIT THE IMAGINATION.

*Farmer.*—"Now put old woman and children down to life."

a short distance from the house, gets the proprietor settled nicely by his side, and in about two hours he has sketched the outlines of the place, making such alterations as the owner suggests. He then remarks that he will fill in the details after he reaches his room at the hotel in town, where he has all the needed conveniences for elaborating the work. If this plan is satisfactory—as it usually is, since the subject is easily persuaded by a dapper artist who knows his business thoroughly—the sketcher presents the contract, receives the money called for by it and proceeds to do up the next man.

It is a fact that, of all the views on the maps of Jackson, Scott and Linn Counties, in Iowa, and Rock Island and Carroll Counties, in Illinois, there was but one sketch which was not paid in full a year before the map was completed. The exception noted was that of Judge Greene's place, near Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Judge Greene refused to pay more than half of his contract. This seems almost incredible, but it is true.

One finds it difficult to believe that such men as patronized the maps in those fine counties could be induced to pay \$36 to \$60 each to entire strangers, on a mere pencil sketch. Many of the views looked no more like the places they were said to represent than they did like the capital at Washington; but there was no relief after the maps were published; the money was paid months before the work was done, and not a line was there in the contract binding the publishers to do



otherwise than as they did. They had lived up to their part of the agreement.

## COST AND SALES OF A COUNTY MAP.

SUCH AS PUBLISHED BY THOMPSON & EVERTS.

**Estimate** being on an ordinary County of Sixteen Townships, with sales of 1,200 copies, which is an average.

## SALES.

1,200 Maps, at \$6 each .....	\$7,200	
50 Views, at \$40 each .....	2,000	
		<hr/>
		\$9,200

## COST.

Commissions on Maps, 50 cents each.....	\$ 600	
Commissions on Views, 10 per cent.....	200	
Copying Township Plats from Tax Lists, \$3.50 each.....	56	
Making Township Maps from observation and copying, \$28 each.....	448	
Making City and Township Plats.....	25	
Engraving 16 Townships, \$15 each.....	240	
Engraving Plats.....	20	
Printing 1,200.....	140	
Lithographing 50 Views, \$5.50 each.....	275	
Heading and Extras.....	20	
Sketching Views, 10 per cent.....	200	
Mounting and Coloring 1,200 Maps, 90 cents each,	1,080	
Paper .....	200	
Freight and incidental expenses.....	300	
Commissions for collecting on Maps, 40 cts. each,	480	
Commissions for collecting Views, 3 per cent.....	60	
		<hr/>
		4,344
Profits.....		<hr/>
		\$4,856

It will be seen that the views amounted to \$2,000, which was paid in the early stages of the work. They would have to pay in cash as follows:

Commissions to map-canvassers.....	\$ 600
Commissions to view-canvassers.....	200
Commissions to view-sketchers.....	200
Paid surveyors.....	529
Incidental expenses.....	150
	<hr/>
	\$1,679

The balance they had time on, or could have had if they wished, as their credit was A 1.

So it will be seen that every time they mapped a county they collected enough to pay all field expenses and have over \$300 to start them on the next county.

The above estimate is made on the supposition that all subscriptions are delivered, which is not the case by any means. We have no way of making estimate of such losses only by guess; but probably 5 per cent would cover it.

There are always several thousand extra views sold at 10 cents each, for framing. The cost of those views was about 2 cents. They always charged a great deal more for business blocks, which was clear gain.

#### COST OF VIEWS.

As to the cost of those sketches, it is true that the publishers made a fine profit. The money was all paid

in advance. The actual cost to the publishers was as follows :

Commission for canvassing, 10 per cent.....	\$ 3 50
Commission for sketching, 10 per cent.....	3 50
Commission for collecting, 5 per cent.....	1 75
Lithographing.....	5 50
Printing, paper, etc.....	2 00
<hr/>	
Total cost.....	\$16 25
Price charged victims.....	36 00
<hr/>	
Profit to publishers.....	\$19 75

#### CAPTAIN A. T. ANDREAS.

Soon after commencing work in these counties, they engaged Andreas, who had just emerged from an unprofitable business scheme, to assist them to canvass Rock Island. His first efforts were far from successful, on account of a natural repugnance to the peddling business; but Everts was confident that he possessed all the elements of success, and needed but experience to make the matter win. As Andreas eventually did become one of the most noted map and atlas men of the country, a sketch of his character and appearance will be appreciated by those who bought "Andreas' Illustrated Historical Atlas of Iowa," and his numerous County Atlases and Histories from Iowa to New York, which will be hereafter described.

The Captain was of good personal appearance, above the medium height, and light complexioned. He was a man of slight frame, nervous and incessant-

ly active; young in years, but of sufficient worldly experience to give him self-command. He had an open countenance, smiled easily and laughed heartily on occasion. His eyes were blue, frank in their gaze and sure to impress the beholder favorably. His language was good, his manner of speaking earnest, and his bearing, while in conversation, such as to enlist attention and inspire confidence. He was quick to form opinions, reach conclusions and prompt to act. He met one with an intuitive idea of what one had to say, and anticipated results. He possessed personal magnetism. He had mixed with all classes of men, and had purposely studied human nature. His aim in life was to succeed. In brief, this man may be summed up in these words: a cosmopolitan Yankee.

As a canvasser, Andreas soon made a decided hit. He achieved remarkable success—always securing a large per cent of the men he approached. When his friends told him that the business was beneath him, he responded that he would rather be a good map agent than a poor lawyer. This is a key to his operations, as we shall soon show.

#### SUMMARY OF THE MAP BUSINESS.

We have given the details of the workings of the most extensive local map institution that has ever existed. In two years, the \$800 they originally invested was turned into twice that many thousands. Before the other map publishers learned "How 'Tis



Done," they were just as extensively into the county atlas business. In the East, the map men were numerous, but running in the old way, not thinking for a moment that there was a more profitable plan. It is very hard to follow these firms in those days. They operated very economically. They seemed to be as one family. They would be together for a county or two, and then trade off and change work. It looks as though two or three of them would get together, take a notion to make surveys of a county, each one put in a couple of shirts in the box of his odometer, and start off, probably to be gone a month, or until he had finished his part of the county. Ten or fifteen cents a day would support a man who devoted his time to such public benefactions. They would then put their surveys on paper in India ink, and sell to some man, who would, in turn, canvass the county. Some surveyors would take orders as they did the surveying. In most all cases, the surveyors would sell their maps to a company of canvassers, and when they had their part finished they would sell to a publisher. Hardly in a case can we learn that any firm combined the requisite qualities to carry on the whole business. It would not be interesting to the reader to give an account of the operations of the firms operating over the country. Our object is to sketch the operations of one firm, on account of the perfection to which they brought their business in so short a space of time. They were the only ones who mapped the counties until they groaned from the burdens of



the maps they had bought and from the loss of the money that went away in the map men's pockets.

ALL GO INTO THE ATLAS BUSINESS.

The atlas fever seemed to strike the map men alike; for in a short space of time they were all publishing atlases. Those in the East continued on the odometer plan of making surveys. They did nothing in the picture, portrait, or biography line, but confined themselves to making accurate maps. Their sales were not large, and the only advantage the atlas had over the maps was the change it gave their canvassers. A man having a county map ten years old would not buy another; but, if the same map was cut up in sections and bound in an atlas, they would be carried into new fields by the canvasser, and subscribe.



## COUNTY ATLASES.

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The elaborate illustrated county atlases, as published by the large firms so extensively, were originated by A. T. Andreas. It was a scheme that, in five years, took from every county in the northern States numbering 10,000 inhabitants and over, not less than \$10,000, and in some cases as high as \$45,000. He originated the plan of State atlases, such as has since been carried out in Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana. His atlas of Minnesota cost the people of that State nearly a quarter of a million of dollars, and that of Iowa nearly half a million of dollars! He also started the scheme of county histories that is now sweeping the Northern States.

By patient inquiry, the writer has discovered all of the "inside workings" of the canvasser's trade, and is able to lay before the many readers of this book the secrets of the "profession." There are seldom, or never, in any branch of business, genuine inventions, and the atlas business is no exception to the rule. The greater number of alleged works of genius are nothing more than accidental discoveries made by quick-witted men, who are sharp enough to see and improve the opportunities suggested to them. It was

by means of the veriest accident that the county atlas plan was thought of; and, for the benefit of those who have paid out money for such works, we here give the history of the affair:

HOW ANDREAS ACCIDENTALLY HIT UPON THE COUNTY  
ATLAS SCHEME.

One day, Capt. Andreas, while canvassing Scott County for the map, chanced to arrive at a farmhouse just at dinner-time. The good farmer invited the wayfarer to stay and partake of the excellent victuals which were smoking on the table. Andreas was not slow in accepting the offer to dine, and joined the group, after some minor work in stabling their horses. When the Captain broached the subject of the county map, the farmer remarked that when the map of Scott County was made, some ten years previous, he was Assessor of the township, and one was presented to him by the county. As it was unhandy for his purpose, he had cut it up so he could have it bound in book-form; and produced it. Here was a copy of the old map of the county. Not many were in existence, and those few were so badly faded as to be almost illegible. Each township occupied a page, and was as plain and distinct as when new.

The sharp canvasser saw a point at once. By making county maps in sections of a township each, and binding those leaves in a substantial manner, a new field of enterprisc would be opened. Andreas studied

the matter over, and the more he thought upon the subject the better it appeared to him. He saw that the sale could be doubled without making a cumbersome volume, and could make a special hit by introducing the names of land-owners on every forty acres, if desired. Additional space could be devoted to views of farms and buildings, since the atlas could contain as many leaves as desired, and the profit on them would be the most lucrative feature of the business. Besides all this, historical matter could be inserted in ordinary printed pages, and an increased interest in the book thereby secured.

This plan commended itself to the Captain's mind on each subsequent investigation of the matter. It was found that the binding of the volume would cost no more than the mounting of the maps, and the extra mechanical work simply represented the increase of an enormously profitable business. When Andreas suggested his plan to Thompson & Everts, they laughed at his wild project and refused to look at it in the light in which he saw it; but that did not deter him from figuring and arranging for himself. He quietly learned all he could about the business, and finally announced his determination to carry out the scheme, whether that firm would aid him or not. At last, Everts concluded to experiment with one county, but Thompson would not venture on the "wild-goose chase," as he considered it. Everts made Andreas promise to stay with him until one county was tried on the new plan. And the labor was begun. But



Thompson became converted when he saw Everts' determination, and they proceeded together.

Henry County, Iowa, was chosen as the experimental territory. The price of the atlas was fixed at \$9. The canvass was commenced, but every one of old canvassers protested against the change from wall-maps to atlases. In spite of that, the enterprise was pushed vigorously and a large force of men was put into the field.

It chanced that crops were a failure in Henry County the year the county atlas was made; but a good list was secured, notwithstanding.

#### ANDREAS, LYTER & CO.

When Henry County was completed, A. T. Andreas, J. M. Lyter and F. H. Griggs formed a copartnership under the style of Andreas, Lyter & Co. Andreas was to be the active man and the other members of the firm were to furnish the required funds. They began in Knox County, Ill. Mr. Griggs published the atlas at his establishment in Davenport, doing all the work except the lithographing. In two years' time, Andreas purchased the shares of his partners, giving them the original amount invested, 10 per cent interest for the use thereof, paid to partners all salaries and expenses and \$20,000 in cash! Some idea of the character of this business may be formed from the truthful statement that, during the two years' life of the firm, their net profits were \$47,000! This im-



mense sum was realized on an investment of \$5,000. Besides this profit, the firm lost heavily by the Chicago fire in October, 1871, which was deducted from the business before the profits were determined.

#### A NEW AND VALUABLE IDEA.

When Andreas commenced in Knox County, he adopted the capital idea of publishing, in tabular form, the names of subscribers to the atlas, giving the section they resided on, or the town they lived in, their business or occupation, the State, county and town they came from, and when they settled in Illinois. This new feature was but another phase of the scheme to tickle the fancy of the public and coddle the vanity of the average man. This simple addition of individual names increased the sales of the atlas 25 per cent.

#### BIOGRAPHICAL "DODGE."

The outgrowth of this brief mention of names was the biography dodge, which was suggested by some farmer remarking that Andreas ought to tell of the hard times experienced by early settlers. The project was too good a one to lose, and subscribers were offered, with a great show of magnanimity, the opportunity to insert brief personal sketches of themselves at 2½ cents per word, "just to pay for type-setting."

By reference to their Illinois atlases will be found (excepting Knox County) the list of those who

paid for their personal puffs. Some contributed as much as \$300 for these sketches, while all of them ranged from \$10 to \$100. When the scheme was first tried, one of the firm was thoroughly frightened at the prospect of collecting the money on the contracts, as the sketches seemed so utterly flat "after they were cold." But Andreas was confident he had struck the right vein, and so it proved. Not one man in a hundred refused to pay for the biography. They read, blushed, smiled, and then would go out among neighbors to receive congratulations on account of having seen such a remarkable career. Of course the neighbor saw through it and would ask how much he paid, etc.; then the blush would be turned to anger and laugh to rage. This feature was subsequently elaborated, as will be shown in its proper order.

#### PORTRAITS OF PROMINENT CITIZENS INTROUCED.

The next paying scheme was that of introducing portraits of "prominent men" at \$100 a head. Every man worth property enough to make a contract was flattered into believing that he was a "leading citizen." A lithographic portrait was made, which cost the firm very little, but the public looked upon them as a work of art. This plan proved an excellent one. The egotistic fellows desired just such conspicuousness, and they were amply accommodated.

As every new bait thrown out seemed to be taken eagerly, the atlas men devoted their leisure to

studying up what was best to put on the hooks next. They then introduced a novel idea of

#### PORTRAYING THE WHOLE FAMILY.

When a man was to have a view of his premises, they would talk him into paying extra for each small portrait and have himself in one of the upper corners of the picture, his wife in the other, with William Henry, Susan Jane, John Thomas, Hannah Maria, Edward E., Lucy, Frank and the baby, Allie, ranging along between. These portraits were small, and generally old ones, and taken by country artists, in the old-fashioned way. These family rows caused a great deal of amusement among the "town folks." Then they introduced the more novel idea of putting on the lower side of the picture portraits of blooded stock, from the Hambletonian breed of horses, and fancy Short-horn cattle, to Berkshire and Poland-China hogs and Merino sheep. Anything a man had could be placed on his picture so long as he paid for it, which made it remind one of the bills on the side of a country barn in springtime.

#### ENTHUSIASTIC CANVASSERS.

His men were worked up to such a pitch of enthusiasm that they could accomplish anything they undertook. The canvassers who worked for him were, as a whole, the best set of men ever employed in one field. As

an illustration of what they did, it is cited that one fellow, who had disobeyed the rules of the house in the preceding county, went into Morgan County, Ill., determined to excel and win back his forfeited place.

SOLD AT WHOLESALE TO FARMERS.

As a result of that determination, the man put forth every effort and induced nearly all of the prominent residents to subscribe for several copies each—ostensibly to present to their children! Numerous parties subscribed for half a dozen copies apiece.

This bit of shrewdness stimulated the other canvassers, and each vied with the other in their work. Throughout Morgan, Jersey, Green, Tazewell, Peoria and other counties men subscribed by the wholesale, taking, frequently, from ten to twelve copies. The lists show that one wealthy, but very close, old farmer in Green County, named Samuel Thomas, subscribed for nineteen copies! Who will not admit that human nature is weak? When one stops to think of the plan of work, is it not surprising how many professed sharp men bite at the bait? An entire stranger walks up to “prominent men” and induces them to admit, by cautious arguments, that they would like to see a good atlas of their county made. He works them up to a pitch of anxiety lest the publishers should conclude not to carry out the scheme, and finally induces them to sign an innocent-looking little document indorsing the enterprise. The next man comes along for his



subscription, and usually succeeds in getting an order for several books on the strength of the first indorsement; for no man likes to go back on his word, especially when an oily canvasser is laboring with him on the score of public benefactions. Rich men are generally worked for big returns, for two reasons: first, they generally have more or less genuine interests in the real estate of the county, and can make daily use of such an atlas, and, therefore, are approached confidently on the ground of its being a judicious investment; second, their names are needed because of the influence they will have on poorer men. The latter card is a big one. Nine out of ten poor men are anxious to emulate the example of their rich neighbors; and when a canvasser says: "here is Mr. A. B.'s name, the rich land-owner," poor men are ready to write their names on the same page just for the sake of asserting their equality. They like to have any document circulated which places their names in close connection with the Hon. Mr. Jones or Judge So-and-So. In order to catch the "peeps," as the canvassers irreverently denominate the free and enlightened American people, the strongest efforts are made to get a big list of rich men. The latter class are usually proud of their own prosperity, and like to have the world know all about themselves, and it does not take a "lightning man" very long to detect the particular hobby ridden by each individual. The man is pressed for his "John Hancock" with all the persuasiveness and eloquence of a practiced operator on

masculine vanity. The more copies the rich man subscribes for the more he is extolled, and the virtues of his family are made to appear in brilliant colors before his blinded eyes. In about a month from the date of his subscription to the work, along comes another suave and gentlemanly fellow, who expresses a desire to see the rich man's beautiful residence, handsome business block or spacious factory properly sketched and placed in the atlas as a "representative" institution of the county. The man is somewhat surprised at this, having formed the idea that his investment ended with his subscription. But he is persuaded that so influential a man should be appropriately classed among the other "leading men," and that his money already put in the book would be thrown away unless a view of his place was inserted; so he signs another contract.

Then he is given a short breathing-spell, when suddenly appears a literary-looking chap, who introduces himself as the "editor" of the atlas, and placidly informs him that the publishers have concluded to publish biographies of a few prominent men. Some how this scheme reaches the proper spot, and he usually bites at once. A long list of printed questions are read to him. He is unable to give the necessary data there, and usually invites the "editor" to his house, where, with the aid of wife and parents, or whomever he can refer to, he gathers the engrossing points as to where and when he was born and whom he married, how many children he is the father of, and how liberal he has been with his wealth. When he has reached the





CANVASSING A FARMER FOR AN ATLAS.

zenith of good-feeling and has convinced himself that he is a great man, and that the atlas will be improved 1,000 per cent by the insertion of these biographies, the slick "editor" drops his spectacles and begins to explain what an immense expense the publishers will be put to in getting the biographies out. They ask only such men to appear in the work as are already distinguished and are able to help bear the cost. The pleasant "editor" asks the rich man to sign the following contract which is printed at the bottom of a long list of questions which covers almost everything any man could ever see or do, hear or know off, from childhood to the grave, as to himself, ancestors, or posterity.

#### CONTRACT.

ANDREAS, LYTER & Co.,

Please publish my biography by putting the above answers to questions in readable and grammatical form, for which I agree to pay you  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents per word, for all words you see fit to insert in order to make my biography read as it should from the above questions and answers. Payment to be made in cash when books are ready for delivery.

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—18—

The "editor" then strings out the biography, piles on the flattery and extols the many virtues of his patron until he is made the embodiment of all that is good and beautiful. The more that is given of this sort of stuff the more the average man will be pleased; and all this while he is deluding himself with the belief that his neighbors will not think the matter is paid for at a good round price. But after a time the



Atlas comes around, and in it those biographies, strung out as long as the "editor" can find words in the English language that will pay at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cents apiece. The bill generally is paid as quiet as possible so as to get them away and enable the victims to declare that they knew nothing about the biographies until the book came out. They swear that they have no idea of how that infernal "editor" learned of those facts, unless it was by pumping the respective families during the temporary absence of *pater familias*.

In about a month or so more, the artist comes along, selecting the best looking men as subjects for lithographic portraits. The canvasser in this special field has a soft job. When it comes to a proposal of presenting a man's features, carved in lasting stone, down to remotest future generations, the task is generally easy. The worms which destroy this weak body are powerless over that block of lithographic marble. Since he has gone into everything else, and is solemnly assured that there are no other branches of the work to follow, he goes into the portrait department also. His biography would really be incomplete without it.

The plan followed is to scatter these departments along so that the burden will not be felt perceptibly, the principle being that a man falling a hundred feet is sure to be dashed to pieces, while one who falls a hundred feet, one foot at a time, is uninjured. To go to a man at first with all those expensive luxuries, would be fatal; but take one at a time to him,

beginning with the smallest and most unimportant, and few fail to escape the trap.

#### ARTISTIC QUALIFICATIONS NECESSARY.

A certain percentage of the human family have born in them the art of reproducing on paper anything and everything they see. These men are as plenty as flakes in a snowstorm. Those selected for the atlas business must have also the peculiar traits of making their subjects think they are a little more than human; must be able to get them to increase the size of their view, and be good collectors. The canvasser for views gauges a man as to about the extent he will go. The artist comes along, and is astonished to find such a fine place with only a 6-inch view. He can't do it justice in that size; shows how small and indistinct everything must be, and fairly forces the man into increasing his contract to a half or full page.

#### ESTIMATED COST AND SALES OF A COUNTY ATLAS.

We can give the reader a very correct idea of the cost and profits of a county atlas, based upon cost and sales. How closely their collections were made is mere guess work. In some counties they would undoubtedly collect very closely, in others trouble would spring up and make them lose heavily.

## ESTIMATED COST AND PROFITS

of a County Atlas, taking the Atlas of Peoria County,  
Illinois, published by A. T. Andreas, in 1878:

## SALES.

2140 Subscribers, at \$ 9 each.....	\$19,260	
6 full-page Views, 145 " .....	870	
77 half-page Views, 76 " .....	5,608	
41 eight-inch views, 60 " .....	2,460	
50 six-inch Views, 36 " .....	1,800	
12 four-inch Views, 28 " .....	336	
2 Portraits, 250 " .....	500	
8 Portraits, 100 " .....	800	
63 columns of Biographies, 2½ cents per word, 8 words to a line.....	1,134	
3 pages of Business Notices.....	450	
	<hr/>	\$33,218

## COST.

2140 Subscribers, canvasser's commission, \$1.00 each.....	\$2,140	
18 Townships, copying from records, \$4.50 each.....	81	
18 Townships, surveying, \$28.00 each.....	504	
Making Plats of cities and villages.....	75	
Making Map of county.....	10	
Contracting for \$11,074 worth of Views, commission 10 per cent..	1,107	
Contracting for \$1,300 worth of Portraits, commission 10 per ct...	130	
Contracting for \$1,154 worth of Biographies, comm'n 30 per ct....	340	
Engraving 18 Townships, \$20 each .....	\$ 360	
Engraving 5½ pages Town Plats, \$15 per page.....	83	
Engraving Map of county.....	30	
Lithographing 65 pages of Views, \$35 each .....	2,275	
Lithographing 10 Portraits, \$9 each.....	90	
Printing 96 pages of lithographic work, two pages on one stone, \$8 per 1000.....	720	
	<hr/>	3,558
44 pages of type matter, \$4.50 per page.....	198	
Coloring Maps and Plats.....	375	
183 reams of Paper, \$12 per ream .....	2,196	
Binding 2140 at 92 cents each.....	1,968	
Delivering and collecting Atlases, 60 cents each.....	1,284	
Delivering and collecting Views, Portraits, etc., 5 per cent.....	697	
Freight, Office expenses, etc., etc., etc....	1,000	
	<hr/>	\$15,663
Profits,		\$17,555

The margin he had to work on was \$17,555. These estimates are taken from reliable sources. Of course, he did not make that much profit. He most likely did not make that many atlases, nor did he collect in full from all of them. But we have his scale of prices from men who worked for him for years. And as to the cost of the mechanical part of the work, we have it correct. We have had an atlas of Peoria County before us, and, assisted by men who were at work during the publication of the volume, we think we have a very correct estimate. Our informants think that he published 2,000 atlases and had a fine delivery, and made in Peoria County a clear \$15,000, which was about an average county for him. He did a more profitable business in several other counties, in proportion to the population. We have not space to give in detail what other counties have contributed to maps, atlases and histories.

#### THE MAGNITUDE OF THE ATLAS BUSINESS.

Thompson & Everts, after making a few county atlases in Iowa, transferred their operations to Northern Illinois, where there were more and better improvements, and men were better able to pay large sums for vanity's sake. After making a few counties, Thompson sold his interest to Everts for a very large sum, with a view to getting into a more quiet life. Everts took into partnership two of his most competent men—O. L. Baskin and D. J. Stewart. They operated



in a few counties in Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin, when they dissolved, Everts and Stewart going to Michigan, where they operated in several counties, doing an immense business. They in turn dissolved, Everts throwing a very large force into Ohio, covering half the State in a year's time. Stewart took a few counties in Northern Ohio. They finished Ohio in two years, and then went into Pennsylvania, and thence into New York and New Jersey, constantly clashing with the easy-going Eastern fellows, and always coming out ahead, on account of having a more attractive publication and a large force of men that they could concentrate in a short time. While Everts and Stewart were not in partnership but very little, yet they never clashed. Everts always employed the smartest men, to whom he gave large salaries. Every few months, some of his best men would conclude to go into the business for themselves. All the Eastern county atlases published on the "greased lightning plan" are offshoots from Everts.

A. T. ANDREAS.

Andreas, Lyter & Co. published some dozen counties in Central Illinois, when Mr. Andreas purchased the interests of his partners, and spread out, operating in Illinois, Iowa, Indiana and Ohio in his own name, and in Indiana and Ohio with O. L. Baskin, and in New York with both Mr. Baskin and G. S. Burr. He began, in 1870, from nothing, and, in 1875, when he

delivered his atlas of Iowa, he had published twenty-three county and two State atlases, his total sales, as taken from his books, being \$1,160,000.

#### WARNER & BEERS.

Mr. Augustus Warner commenced in the map business about the year one, or as far back as we can find any living man to have been. He followed the odometer from Nova Scotia to the Blue Grass region of Kentucky, skipping but very little country. He first started in for himself in Illinois in 1868, with a Mr. Higgins. He made a map of the counties in Illinois on a large scale, which he published in atlas form, putting several counties on a page. To this they would add maps of a township of a county, or all of them, as they figured would be the most profitable. In 1870, F. W. Beers was added to the firm. Soon after, Mr. Higgins formed a partnership with H. Belden. They soon added pictures, portraits and biographies, and did a large and profitable business. Their operations were entirely confined to Illinois.

#### OTHER ATLAS FIRMS.

The others that fell into the atlas business were men who had been with some of the firms we have mentioned. It would be impossible to follow their operations; neither would the reader be interested. In short, they followed the leaders in every particular. Only a few can now find profitable counties to operate in. Belden Bros. in Canada, Kingman Bros. and F.

W. Beers in Indiana, are doing a moderate and careful business, and doing all they can to please their patrons. In the East, several firms are moving along in the same old ruts, because they have been in the business all their lives, and don't know what else to do.

ESTIMATE OF SALES OF COUNTY MAPS, COUNTY AND STATE ATLASES AND COUNTY HISTORIES IN ILLINOIS.

We have gathered from reliable sources a very close estimate of the sales of county publications in fifteen counties of Illinois.

The population of these counties is almost 500,000, which is nearly one-fifth the population of the State. As 90 of the 102 counties have been operated in by these parties, and those not "worked" have a very small population, and in a great many counties like Jersey, Greene, Scott, Marshall, Stark, and many others that have no large floating population, far larger lists were sold in proportion, we therefore think the counties we have given are a fair average. These figures show \$2,800,000 paid for county maps, atlases and histories. In 1877, Warner & Beers made an atlas of the State of Illinois. Their sales were \$180,000, which shows, in round numbers, that Illinois has paid for "local publications" \$3,000,000. And nearly all of it has been done in less than eight years.

# ESTIMATE OF ATLASES SOLD IN FIFTEEN COUNTIES OF ILLINOIS.

COUNTIES.	Publications.	Price.	Publishers.	Date.	Estimate of am't sold, including Illustrations, etc.
Bureau.....	Map.....	\$5 00	N. Matson .....	1868	\$5,500
" .....	History .....	3 00	N. Matson .....	1870	4,000
" .....	Reminiscences.....	2 00	N. Matson .....	1872	3,000
" .....	Atlas.....	15 00	Warner & Beers .....	1875	23,000
" .....	History .....	6 50	H. F. Kett & Co.....	1877	7,500
					\$43,000
Carroll .....	Map.....	6 00	Thompson & Everts .....	1869	9,000
" .....	History .....	6 50	H. F. Kett & Co.....	1878	5,500
					14,000
De Kalb.....	Map.....	5 00	.....	.....	4,090
" .....	History .....	3 00	H. L. Bois .....	1868	2,700
" .....	Atlas .....	9 00	Thompson & Everts .....	1871	17,400
" .....	History .....	4 50	H. F. Kett & Co.....	1876	8,800
					28,500
Henry.....	Map.....	5 00	.....	.....	4,000
" .....	Atlas .....	15 00	Warner & Beers .....	1875	21,000
" .....	History .....	6 50	H. F. Kett & Co.....	1877	11,000
					3,600
Jo Daviess.....	Atlas.....	15 00	Warner, Higgins & Beers.....	1872	19,000
" .....	History .....	6 50	H. F. Kett & Co.....	1878	9,000
					28,000
Kane.....	Map.....	5 00	Thompson Bros.....	1864	6,000
" .....	Atlas.....	9 00	Thompson & Everts .....	1872	23,000
" .....	History .....	6 90	Wm. Le Baron & Co.....	1877	6,500
					35,500



Knox.....	Map.....	5 00	Thompson Bros.....	1858	6,000
".....	Atlas.....	9 00	Andreas, Lyter & Co.....	1870	26,000
".....	History.....	4 50	Chapman & Co.....	1878	4,500
La Salle.....	Map.....	5 00	Thompson Bros.....	1869	8,500
".....	Atlas.....	15 00	Warner & Beers.....	1871	23,000
".....	History.....	6 50	H. F. Kett & Co.....	1877	11,000
".....	History.....	2 50	E. Baldwin.....	1877	6,000
Madison.....	Map.....	5 00	.....	.....	4,000
".....	Atlas.....	9 00	Brink & Co.....	1872	36,000
".....	History.....	6 50	Brink & Co.....	1878	11,000
Morgan.....	Map.....	5 00	.....	.....	4,000
".....	Atlas.....	9 00	Andreas, Lyter & Co.....	1872	26,000
".....	History.....	6 50	Donnelley, Lloyd & Co.....	1878	6,000
Ogle.....	Map.....	5 00	Thompson Bros.....	1866	9,000
".....	Atlas.....	9 00	Everts, Baskin & Stewart.....	1872	27,000
".....	History.....	6 50	H. F. Kett & Co.....	.....	12,000
Peoria.....	Map.....	5 00	Allen.....	1866	3,000
".....	Atlas.....	9 00	Andreas, Lyter & Co.....	1873	32,000
Warren.....	Map.....	5 00	Thompson Bros.....	.....	7,000
".....	Atlas.....	15 00	Higgins.....	1872	18,000
".....	History.....	6 50	H. F. Kett & Co.....	1877	8,000
Will.....	Map.....	5 00	.....	.....	6,000
".....	Atlas.....	9 00	Thompson, Bros. & Burr.....	1875	38,000
".....	History.....	7 80	Le Baron & Co.....	1878	12,000
Winnebago.....	Map.....	5 00	.....	.....	4,000
".....	Atlas.....	15 00	Warner & Beers.....	1871	22,000
".....	History.....	6 50	H. F. Kett & Co.....	1877	8,000
					<u>\$561,500</u>

36,500

48,500

51,000

36,000

48,000

35,000

33,000

56,000

34,000

## SALE OF LOCAL PUBLICATIONS IN IOWA.

Iowa has been worked more than Illinois, in proportion to its population, many of its counties having a county map, an atlas and a history. We have authentic figures from a few counties, but one will suffice, and we take Cedar:

County Map, published by Pyatt in 1866, sold 1000 at \$5 each.....	\$5,000 00
Harris & Warner, County Atlas, in 1872, sold 800 at \$12 each.....	9,600 00
County History, by H. F. Kett & Co., in 1878, sold 900 at \$6.50 each.....	5,850 00
Total .....	<u>\$20,450 00</u>

Cedar County has a population of 17,879, which shows over \$1 per capita. A great many counties in Iowa have never had a map or history; but when those fellows skip a county, it is one with very few people living in it. The history men have made a pretty clear sweep in Iowa within the past year. There are no less than eight different sets at work there now. But we will take 61 counties that have over 10,000 inhabitants. Their total population is 1,200,000. If they have contributed to the "cause" as much as Cedar, which they undoubtedly have, Iowa has paid for county publications, \$1,350,000. And for State Atlas, \$400,000.00. In 1868, Asher & Adams sold 8,000 Wall Maps of Iowa at \$12 each, and, two years later, 4,000 of Gray's General Atlas were sold at \$15 each. Which gives, in round numbers, \$2,000,000 that Iowa has paid the map, atlas and county history men in ten years. This is \$17 per head for every voter, or \$33 for every real estate owner.

## STATE ATLASES.

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It would be doing gross injustice to all parties concerned to class atlases under the general heading of swindles. They are by no means humbugs; but the secret of the general disaffection concerning such works is, that the people at large do not need them. Some classes of men have constant occasion to use books of reference, such as atlases, dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc.; but they are professional men, who live by brain-work. The majority of people live by hand-labor, or a combination of hand and brain which requires no special original literary research. Hence, we place volumes of reference under the heading of articles indispensable to a limited class; valuable to still another class, who are rich and have leisure to gratify peculiar tastes; and almost valueless to the great mass of humanity. To illustrate this more fully, let us imagine a farmer who would expend thousands of dollars in the purchase of a railroad locomotive, and a railroad superintendent who would buy a grain-thresher. Each machine is indispensable in its own province, but, away from that particular sphere of work, it becomes a worthless piece of mechanism.

No farmer would think of going into a local book store and purchasing an atlas of his State unless he actually needed the volume to aid him in some other task than that of farming; and then he would buy a work which treated of just the branches of learning he desired to acquire, or by which his children would be aided in their studies. Voluntary purchases are almost always made on the ground of necessity. But State atlases are only a necessity to those who deal in real estate or are engaged in frequent journeys over the county, or have business where they are valuable to refer to. Even for many who are occupied in those ways, cheaper maps and inexpensive atlases are all that need be obtained. The cause which leads to a universal aversion to a really meritorious work is mainly the forcing of the market and the injudicious sales thus made. Of the hundreds of thousands in the Northern States who have in the past ten years purchased atlases, fully nine out of ten have never spent an hour in examining them for information or profit. Most of them are thrown aside, or are given the children to play with and disfigure or tear up.

Publishers found a field of operation in atlases, through the mediumship of canvassers, because of a mistaken sense of their general usefulness; and so crowded the country with such wares as to produce a complete revulsion of feeling. The day has come when a proper *expose* should be made, and a long-suffering public be relieved of the burden imposed on it by canvassers.



## ORIGIN OF THE STATE ATLAS BUSINESS.

The idea of making an atlas of a State on a grand scale, embodying the principal features of the county atlas, was the product of Capt. Andreas' fertile brain. He had a force of men at work in the vicinity of Terre Haute, Ind.; Mansfield, Ohio; Southeastern Iowa and Western Central Illinois. Counties of sufficient population and being in condition for an atlas were not plenty. The numerous large firms operating from the Atlantic Ocean to the Missouri River, with every week some offshoots springing out from some of them, had absorbed all the desirable territory.

## ATLAS OF MINNESOTA.

Just after the panic of 1873, Andreas began the preliminary work of his atlas of Minnesota. His plan was to make a map of all the best counties, so as to cover one page, which was, inside the margin lines, 12x16 inches, or, in cases of emergency, could be 14x18 inches. Where the county was thinly settled, several counties were put on one page or double pages. When a man subscribed, he was to get his name engraved on the map, and a dot made to represent the location of his residence on the section, and, in figures, the number of acres of land he owned. The maps were to be carefully made by having men traverse the roads, and locate from observation and the best information they could get from intelligent citizens. Section lines, timber, streams, swamps and bluffs, were

to be shown, and locating towns, cities, villages, railroads, wagon-roads, mills, manufactories, churches, schoolhouses, coal-banks, quarries and all things on the surface of the country that would be desired. The price was fixed at \$15. Six good men were distributed in different parts of the State to make an experimental canvass. The scheme took like wildfire. A man was then sent to secure the newspapers. He made a contract with every newspaper in the State, at very low rates, to print all articles sent them by A. T. Andreas, at so much per line. Simultaneously, every sheet in Minnesota loaded its columns, extolling to the skies the grandest enterprise of the day and age. People read, became enthusiastic, and longed for the day when they could gaze upon such a production. All his county forces were then concentrated upon Minnesota, and T. H. Thompson, formerly of Thompson & Everts, was placed in charge. Sixty canvassers poured down upon the credulous people of Minnesota like the plagues of old. Surveyors, draughtsmen, sketchers, etc., soon appeared on the field. They were to be seen everywhere and on all occasions. They were smart, affable, wore good clothes, and conducted themselves, with few exceptions, very gentlemanly. They "coined" money, and spent it freely. All classes of trade figured for their business. They were welcome visitors into the best families, and many an atlas man was invited to partake of a bountiful repast at the finest residences. He was looked upon by the people in the same light as is

the "new preacher" by devout church people. The details of the business were about the same as in the county atlas business. The commissions were as follows: Canvassing for the atlas, \$3 on subscribers in town and \$3.50 among farmers, on all that were paid for; \$2 and \$2.50, respectively, was paid in cash. A majority of the men earned from \$25 to \$60 per week. The other departments were very little changed. Everything moved on swimmingly until the "money-bags" began to give out. Such a force of men, with the necessary expenses of publication, told upon the Captain's exchequer. He secured the assistance of B. F. Allen, the great "Western banker." The bargain was, that when Andreas got to the end of his rope, Allen was to furnish the balance and take one-fourth of the profits. He was the rock on which the Andreas craft became shipwrecked, as we will hereafter relate. Nearly twelve thousand subscribers were secured, when Andreas threw his whole force of canvassers into Iowa, to atlas that state on the same plan. The picture-men secured some \$35,000 in their line, the portrait-artists some three hundred "prominent men and old-settlers," at from \$30 to \$100 apiece, and the biography-"editors" their full share, also, and all in turn passed over the line into the fertile Hawkeye State. The atlas of Minnesota was completed according to programme. Ten thousand copies were printed, and cost, when delivered, about \$200,000. That season the wheat crop of Minnesota was not good, and the price

very low. The atlas was shipped the fore part of December. The atlas was what was contracted for, as near as could be furnished ; but money was scarce, and every man who did not want to pay hunted up some errors or found some fault with it, and endeavored to get out of having to live up to his subscription. An immense number of notes were taken.

#### ATLAS OF IOWA.

In January, "the great Iowa banker" collapsed. His victims numbered thousands, and Andreas was "in" \$132,000 in indorsed paper and discounted notes. He saw he must unload his side schemes and concentrate all his efforts on Iowa, where he had a very large sum already invested. The interests of his creditors were to take him through. They were all capitalists—principally bankers—and were able. The Andreas Atlas Co. was organized, and the scheme was carried out with flying colors. It took months to organize, but during this time he kept a full force working. The company was chartered in April. It was completed and atlases shipped October 4. We have been unable to get the figures we wished for, which were the details of the cost and receipts. Twenty-two thousand five hundred atlases were sold, at \$15 each, and pictures, portraits and biographies a little over \$70,000 more. They published and sent into the State 20,000, which should show receipts of \$430,000 ; but it did not pan out



that much is very certain—probably about even \$400,000.

*Estimated Cost of Atlas of Iowa.*

Canvassing for atlases.....	\$65,000
Canvassing for views, portraits, etc.....	16,000
History.....	18,000
Sketching views.....	6,000
Surveyors.....	12,000
Newspapers.....	10,000
Other expenses.....	20,000
Delivering.....	23,000
Charles Shober & Co., for lithographing.....	47,000
Donnelley, Loyd & Co., printing.....	23,000
Hamilton & Co., paper.....	41,000
A. J. Cox & Co., binding.....	27,000
	<hr/>
	\$308,000

The above figures, we think, can be relied on as very nearly correct. Through years of intimate acquaintance with Mr. Andreas, we from time to time drew from him the figures we have given. We have visited the firms mentioned, and received from them the bills as above. The paper weighed 123 tons, and, when boxed and ready for shipment, the weight was 164 tons. The board for the cases, Mr. Cox informed us, weighed 33 tons. Mr. Carqueville, of Shober & Co., informed us that they had four steam lithographic presses, and Andreas made them buy four more. The presses cost them about \$3,000 each. They ran them for four and one-half months from 1 o'clock Monday morning to 12 o'clock Saturday night.

## ATLAS OF INDIANA

was commenced by Andreas, Baskin & Burr in 1875, on the plan of the Minnesota atlas. Burr's interest was purchased soon after the project was started. When B. F. Allen failed, Andreas transferred his interest to his remaining partner. Baskin interested some capitalist in his enterprise, and the firm became Baskin, Forster & Co. They were doing a thriving business, when the heavy rains of the season almost brought them to a standstill. They did the best they could under the circumstances, and came out with a list of nearly twelve thousand, and a small amount of views and portraits. Total sales, about \$200,000. They furnished a very creditable publication, and complied fully with their published promises. The dishonesty of a good many canvassers, and the failure of crops and consequent hard times, made the venture a losing one.

## ATLAS OF ILLINOIS

was published by Warner & Beers, under the title of the Union Atlas Co., in 1876. It, too, was projected on the principle of the Minnesota atlas. They had more obstacles to contend with than had their contemporaries in other States, as all the good counties in Illinois had been very recently overrun with canvassers for county atlases. In those counties it was almost impossible for agents to make a living in a legitimate way, and, therefore, many of them went to work to

deceive their employers, and get subscribers in any way they could. Very good lists were procured in the "Egyptian" counties, where the county atlas men had not gone. But, as the people of that section are not generally well informed, and ignorance and poverty predominate, their subscribers there did not average well on payday. Most of the views and portraits were also taken from the southern part of the State. They sold, nevertheless, nearly ten thousand copies, and their entire sales were about \$180,000. Their atlas was unusually well compiled, and, for the purposes for which it was advertised to be published—that is, correct maps of counties and plats of towns—it is all that could be asked for. The rascality of agents left a great many copies on hand, and the proprietors found their ledger balanced on the wrong side.

## ATLAS OF WISCONSIN.

In the spring of 1875, Snyder, Van Vecten & Co. thought they would take a hand in this seemingly money-making scheme. They had all been in the county map business in former days, in the old-fashioned way. Their plan was also similar to that of the Minnesota atlas. They had no organization, and were not prepared for such an undertaking. A man named Walling, of New York, was gathering items, intending to make an atlas on a small scale and in a cheap way. Of course these men clashed immediately. Walling got Tackaberry Bros. to assist him

in the canvass. Theirs cost them nothing scarcely, and what sales they made were profitable. They got theirs out before Snyder & Co. were fairly under way. Snyder, Van Vecten & Co. suspended operations for some time, in order to replenish their exchequer, and, when they did resume, it was slow business. They sold some 4,500 copies, had very few views and portraits, and published 2,700. The outcome was a very heavy loss. Mr. Snyder was a very fine gentleman, and went into the State of Wisconsin to make them a very superior atlas; but he was met coldly from the beginning, on account of the dissatisfaction with county atlases and maps. He worked unceasingly for three years on that atlas, and until his health gave entirely out. When the delivery commenced, he was taken down from exhaustion, and died.

#### OTHER STATE ATLASES.

The California project was abandoned. Michigan, New Jersey, Missouri and several other States have had atlases on a small scale, which merely show a little more than wall-maps. Their sales were limited, and they always proved unprofitable.





## INCIDENTS IN THE MAP AND ATLAS BUSINESS.

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A few incidents that have come to our knowledge in the map and atlas business, we think will be interesting, and are not without their lessons.

### PICTURE OF HOUSE BEFORE IT WAS BUILT.

A man named Ellsworth, living in Maquoketa, Iowa, a prominent man and large grain and stock dealer, had a desirable lot, on which he intended, some day, to erect a fine mansion. He contracted for a view of his residence to be printed on the map of Jackson County. Between himself and the artist, a fine exterior was drawn. Mr. Ellsworth was going to fill in from this design, to suit the convenience of his family, before the map would be published. When the map did come, the citizens flocked to the spot where the "palace" was reported to be located, but to see only a few piles of stone and an excavation for a cellar. Mr. Ellsworth's finances had failed to connect. The map fellows dropped into town one morning very suddenly and unexpectedly, as they are noted for doing, and placed Mr. E. in an unpleasant predicament. And

the only thing for him to do was to visit some distant relatives until the people got through making sport of his "visions of a home."

#### FRUITS OF PAYING IN ADVANCE.

Another case happened in C—— R—— Iowa. B. C. Seaver (not quite his name) was the most prominent banker of the place. He was by far the closest calculator in the city. No man ever got ahead of him in business transactions. The old man landed on top every time. No "Shylock" ever dreamed of "tackling" him. Nature has so ordained it that when a man devotes all his thoughts to making money by the finest figuring, and cast off all of the finer feelings to this end, he will seek a little vent-hole through which to spend some of it. And when once he does go outside of his every-day channels to make way with a portion, he loses his accustomed good judgment, and acts like a boy just inheriting a fortune. Mr. Seaver was rich; he did not want that fact hidden under a half-bushel. He had a great deal of land and numerous city lots. The map men could set forth his estates on their map in good shape. Having such handy plats before him made it convenient to show purchasers the locations, boundary, surroundings, etc. Mr. Seaver did not hesitate to indorse the project. His two weaknesses were struck. It would save him money, and his vast estates would have B. C. Seaver engraved on them.



COMMON SCENE IN DELIVERING ATLASES.

*Subscriber's Wife.*—"Fifteen dollars for that 'ere big book, and too poor to ever get a cook-stove, or fix the house up!"



When the canvasser came to Mr. Seaver, there was no trouble to get his subscription for a map. But the canvasser coolly informed him that he was expected to start the list with fifteen copies; if a map of the county was worth \$6 to a farmer, it was worth \$600 to Mr. Seaver; the enterprise would certainly fall through unless Mr. S. came down; and finally said, if he did not take at least six, he would not go further in the enterprise, but throw it up and go into a county where men on whom was conferred such lasting benefits would appreciate them. And the list was headed, "B. C. Seaver, six copies." That was enough. People did not think there was any use to examine into the merits and benefits of the project any further, as Mr. S. had undoubtedly done, and substantially indorsed it, and a clean sweep of the town was made. Mr. Seaver was also a hard worker for the boys. He was "in" himself, and, as he usually was "out" when his pocket-book was touched, this unexpected stroke of liberality and patriotism gave him considerable notoriety. When the picture man came along, he concentrated all his powers on Mr. S. Paying such an amount of money for a thing that could bring him back nothing was not in keeping with his well-known business prudence and sagacity. But he fell a victim to the wily canvasser, who undoubtedly had pulled the right strings, and a contract was given for \$60. The "iron-clad" contract was signed without reading. In a few days the sketch was made. When payment was demanded,



Mr. S. was astonished at its requirements. He never before signed a document without reading it. This time the agent was talking to him, and he signed without reading. Pay \$60 and nothing to show for it but a rough pencil drawing and the promises of strangers that it would be lithographed and printed in a map? Of course the agent explained to him that he was to pay the cost only. The object of the offer to take his picture at cost was to save them from advancing the money. Everybody else's contract was the same way, and Mr. Seaver paid. His house was a two-story-and-half brick, covered with grapevines. In the course of time, the map men returned and commenced their delivery. Mr. Seaver happened to be out of town. His six maps were delivered, but his son, who was Cashier of the bank, received his maps but declined to pay for them. When he had leisure, he examined the much-talked-of map of — County, and, to his astonishment, saw at a glance that the lithographer had left out all the windows in the upper story of his father's house, and had mistaken the grape-vines to represent a stone house. So Mr. Seaver had a two-story stone house to show for his \$60. We need not go into details as to Mr. Seaver's feelings when he saw the ridiculous mistake. He undoubtedly gave vent to his wrath in solitude. It could not be remedied. He had paid for it, and of course men sharp enough to do what they had done would never disgorge a cent. But to pay for the maps he would not; but, on the contrary, would commence suit for

damages. On consulting his attorneys, they concluded it would be pretty hard to prove where he had been or would be damaged. The maps were all delivered, and no proprietors were there to get service on. Mr. S. saw, also, that he could not be released from his subscription for the map on account of the blunder in his view, as he had subscribed for a map, and the views were no part of the map, but bear the same relation to it that an advertisement does to a newspaper. To avoid a suit, which would make public the whole transaction, he paid for his maps. We have no doubt but he made the same old solemn promise so often heard by the men who do the collecting: "The next map, book or any peddler that approaches me, I will —— ———."

P. S. We notice that Mr. Seaver has a portrait and a lengthy biography in "Andreas' Atlas of Iowa." There must have been another pretty good talker to have captured him after his former experience with the same men.

#### A FARMER'S INVESTMENT IN ATLASES.

When Andreas, Lyter & Co. were operating in Greene County, Ill., one of their canvassers found a wealthy farmer named Samuel Thomas. Mr. T. was an old settler, and had amassed a considerable amount of money and property by very close figuring and a life of economy. He supplied his poorer neighbors with money at all times on good security and large interest. His reputation was that of being one of the closest dealing men in the county. The

atlas men happened to reach his tender spot. To the first man he subscribed for some six copies—one for himself and five for his living children. The biography men came along, and wrote him up for \$100. The view man secured his contract for a half-page picture, \$76. The atlas canvasser happened to meet him in town one day, and persuaded him to increase his subscription to include one for each of his grandchildren, which made it nineteen copies. The “picture artist” induced the old gent to have a full-page picture, and on the lower half give a view of his family monument in the village grave-yard. The ‘editor’ thought the boys were getting ahead of him, so he made a trip to Mr. Thomas, and suggested now that he was in so far, to cap the climax by having his portrait on the first page and give a more extended biography of himself, and give one dollar a day of his income for a year to pay for it. Mr. T. thought it a good idea. The following was his investment :

19 Atlases, \$9.....	\$117 00
Page View.....	160 00
Biography and Portrait.....	365 00
	<hr/>
	\$642 00

#### THE LARGEST PATRONS.

The Pekin Alcohol Manufacturing Company, of Pekin, Ill., with its President, H. P. Westerman, and its Treasurer, D. T. Thompson, were undoubtedly the largest investors in the atlas men. They had two full-page views, three half-page views, three portraits,

and very extended biographies, and several copies of the atlas. We have no means of procuring the details, but understand the whole amount was about \$1,300.

#### BUYING MAPS ON SPECULATION.

C. H. Stoddard, Surveyor of Rock Island Company when Thompson & Everts made the map of that county, was, in common with his neighbors, very enthusiastic in regard to the map of his county. He had 320 acres of fine land near Fort Dodge, Iowa. He made them an offer of the land for 320 maps, which was accepted. He thought that he could sell the maps to farmers as he carried on his business of surveying among them. He found that nearly every farmer and business man had one, and as at least one half of them had no place in their house, store or office on which they could hang a map 6 feet 4 inches long their maps were all for sale. At last accounts, Mr. Stoddard had nearly every one of his maps on hand. T. & E. sold their land for \$5.50 per acre.

#### A RASCALLY CANVASSER.

A man named W. G. Stafford made application to A. T. Andreas to canvass for his atlas of Iowa. In personal appearance, fluency of language and those requisites necessary to a canvasser he had no superior. His story was that he had been a general agent for a life insurance company, and his fondness for fast



horses had got him into trouble with his company. He gave them up everything, and proposed to give up all sporting and work hard and save his earnings. His wife accompanied him. His weekly reports were the largest that came into the office. He had a peculiar faculty of traveling on railroads and steamboats without cost to himself, and in fact was a "dead head" everywhere he went. His field of operations was in the vicinity of Oskaloosa, Iowa. Every couple of weeks he would have some excuse to drop into the office in Chicago. As it turned out, those trips to headquarters were to see if his large lists were creating any suspicion, and, if so, to explain everything satisfactorily. When 400 was reached, things began to look as though he was the best canvasser in existence, or something was wrong. His subscription-book was sent for. He wrote that he had mailed it, but it did not come. This looked badly. A man was sent to work with him, but more to play the role of detective than anything else. It did not take long to discover that his list was a "crooked" one. The only thing, then, to do was not to send him money on the pretext that the company was short. The object was to make him spend his money, and deliver all they could and then punish him. They put him at work at Osceola, and put off sending him money from week to week, and then had the hotel and livery men attach his trunks for his bills. They were to deliver in his territory in a short time, and would then have a sure case on him. When the delivery came, it was found that out of 650

subscribers not a dozen were genuine. Nearly every one was a downright forgery. His plan was to go to a man and make a little plat of his farm, saying they were going to make a map with all the farms in the State on it, and when published it would be found in atlas form for sale at the book stores. He would get men to sign their names on the plat in order to avoid mistakes in engraving their names. He would then put a facsimile of the name on his subscription-book. Capt. Andreas followed him to California, but did not succeed in catching him. It has since been ascertained that this man Stafford's whole life abounds in such adventures, and, although arrested several times, he always eludes the penitentiary. He is "away up" in Masonry, and uses the craft in carrying out his rascality and to evade punishment.

#### AN ATLAS PUBLISHER BEATEN.

A prominent atlas publisher conceived a brilliant plan to have the "dead wood" on the farmers who had views of their buildings. There is always more or less trouble when time for payment comes. There are some things left out, or picture is not as fine in workmanship as it should be, or as some neighbor's is. It is proverbial that farmers seldom read a contract given as a subscription. They are thinking of something else, and place all confidence in the agent. The new plan was to have them sign notes for pictures instead of contracts, which they did. It so happened

that the pictures were very poorly lithographed, and consequently the usual "kicking" only worse. When they saw the game played on them, they organized and determined to fight the publisher. It was a big fight, but the farmers came off victorious. The courts decided that when the notes were given there was no consideration. If the notes had been given after the picture was made it would have been a valid transaction. The loss to the publisher was very heavy, as it embraced several counties in vicinity of Sandusky, Ohio.

## MIXED.

In the atlas of Minnesota, Dr. N. M. Bemis, of Faribault, one of the most prominent men of the State, and who has the largest portrait in the atlas, is made to reside in Minneapolis. In the Iowa atlas appear the Recorder of Marshall County and a farmer of Jasper County. The names under their portraits are reversed. When this error was discovered, the atlases not delivered in these counties were corrected.



## BOOK AGENTS.

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The agent who tramps over the country soliciting subscriptions to books has been so ridiculed and abused by press and private citizen that it may seem superfluous to treat of him here. But the plague is just as great to-day as ever, and requires ventilation.

Let us start out with the correct understanding that books are seldom actual swindles. If they are, they soon find their level and drop out of sight. The greater part of those sold by agents are valuable in their proper place, but their value is neutralized through a deliberate forcing of sales. The work of canvassing has been reduced to a science. The houses which constantly turn out thousands of volumes for this special line of trade have issued instructions to agents in every detail. These pamphlets are copyrighted, so as not to be allowed to be furnished to the public without incurring a suit for damages; but we have permission from one of them to use their book, although they had no idea that we would use it in this way. We are doing the gentleman no harm, as there are dozens of others of the same kind; but we have selected his as being the best.



We publish this because it gives the reader a clear insight into the way agents are trained, and permits him to see the arts :

## SUCCESS IN CANVASSING,

*As used by a prominent firm in Chicago.*

### SUCCESS.

1. *Knowing How*.—You have been appointed one of our agents, and we take it for granted that you *intend to succeed*. That is right. But you must also *know how*. We can show you how, if you will let us. Will you do this? If so, and you will PRACTICE what you learn, we unhesitatingly promise you success. Otherwise, success is *impossible*.

2. *With Brains*.—A painter, famous for the strength and brilliancy of his colors, was once asked what he mixed them with. "With brains!" was the significant reply. "SUCCESS IN CANVASSING," when you come to digest it mentally, must be seasoned with the same ingredient. Remember, this is a hand-book for *all* our agents, and this means a vast army of intelligent men and women, some of whom are carrying on the business under circumstances differing widely from your own. Hence, not *all* that we say will be of *equal* pertinence to *your* case. Rest assured, however, that we shall never lay down a PRINCIPLE, and rarely give a positive *direction*, which does not apply to you fully.

3. *How to Master These Instructions*.—Not all at once. They are too long and too important for that. Mark particularly the following directions: When you receive your outfit (which is what "SUCCESS IN CANVASSING" will generally be sent with), read these instructions over once, *carefully*, down to Section 78.

This is all that you should *ever attempt at one sitting*. Your next spare time give wholly to "Organizing Victory," Sections 4 to 10. When you have *mastered* these, and *complied faithfully* with their requirements, read over, a second time, Sections 11 to 78, and also the "Supplement." Then *study* Sections 11 to 42, until you are sure you *understand* them to the minutest detail, and can *apply* them in your canvassing. This done, you are ready for work. "Open the campaign" at once, and then proceed to "the general canvass." While thus engaged, read over, one each day, until their directions are *fixed* in your mind, Sections 43 to 78, and the Supplement. The remaining sections you can read at your leisure.

#### ORGANIZING VICTORY.

4. *A Story of the Empire*.—A great General being placed in command of an important army, it was expected that he would immediately lead it against the enemy. Several weeks passed, and, although the army had indeed "changed camp" frequently, it was still on its own ground. The Emperor was at first disappointed, then impatient, and finally angry. The commander was sent for and sternly asked what he had been doing so long. "Organizing victory, Your Majesty," was the answer, "and now I am ready!" And so it proved. Those apparently fruitless weeks had been devoted to incessant drill and other preparation, and, in the campaign that followed, the legions of the Empire were the victors on every field. Book agent, whomsoever you may be, remember that you, too, must ORGANIZE victory.

5. *The First Step*.—Immediately on receiving your outfit, begin to PREPARE YOURSELF for your arduous duties. How many agents have we known fail right

here, at the very threshold of their work! Better, infinitely better, had they gone to breaking stones on the highway than taken a book agency and neglected to *prepare themselves* for canvassing! The first thing for you to do is to study this manual. Don't dip into it here and there; don't skim hurriedly over it; don't do *anything else* with it than study it exactly as prescribed in Section 3.

6. *Something that Will Surprise You.*—You think very highly of your book. Of course you do, or you would not canvass for it. You will be surprised, therefore, to be told that you do not more than *half appreciate it*. Yet the chances are twenty to one that such is the case. And this is no reflection upon either your intelligence or your good faith. It is simply another way of saying that you have not yet *thoroughly studied* your book. Consequence number one: you do not know what **STRONG POINTS** it really has for your purposes. Consequence number two: you are not half as **ENTHUSIASTIC** about it as you might be, ought to be or will be (if you follow our instructions). Consequence number three: if you should begin canvassing now, you would *fizzle out* the first day. *You must be interested yourself, or you cannot interest others; and the way for you to become interested, is to KNOW your book THOROUGHLY.*

7. *Studying a Canvassing-Book.*—Your examination of the canvassing-book (if this be your outfit) must be an actual *study*. Merely fumbling over the leaves and admiring it in a general way won't do. You might as well expect to be elected to Congress because you have walked around and admired the Capitol at Washington. Study your prospectus volume, feature by feature—title-page, preface, table of contents, illustrations, bindings and *everything*. *Make your publishers help you.* How? By turning once



more to the circulars they have sent you, and seeing what *they* say about the prominent features of the work, and how these are shown in the prospectus; also, by noticing the points specially commended in the printed "Testimonials." Taking one feature at a time, bring together all the facts about it that you can muster; then describe it to yourself from memory, in the clearest and most forcible language that you can invent for the occasion or borrow from your publishers. You will thus thoroughly *digest* what you learn. By this plan, the study of your canvassing-book will prove a pleasant and stimulating mental repast, whereas the attempt to take in and assimilate the *whole thing at once* would make you as torpid and stupid as a gorged anaconda. (See also Section 26.)

8. *Studying a Sample Copy.*—If you intend to use a sample copy in canvassing, study this exactly as if it were a prospectus volume. In addition, read it through carefully, preface (or introduction) and all. Have paper and pencil at hand, and make a note of every passage that you think will *especially* interest those whom you expect to wait on with the book. Finally, select the *cream* of these good things, say six or eight passages of *not over* 300 words each. These you must have at *your fingers' ends*, so that you can refer to them instantly and read them with fluency and effect.

9. *Command of What You Know.*—What an army of STRONG POINTS you will discover your book to possess! By "strong points," we mean interesting features, valuable features, features that will help you *sell it*. You now have some fair appreciation of the work. But can you properly *impress your views on* others? Unless you are an apt salesman, and have experience besides, you *cannot*. You have yet to acquire *perfect mastery* of what you know, and this can only come



from PRACTICE. Remember that, in canvassing, you will have to think rapidly, talk fluently, and show your book to the *best advantage*; and all this, too, without *apparent* effort.

10. *Practicing to Make Perfect.*—Begin practicing at home. “Canvass” some member of your household, or some friend, exactly as if to sell him a book. This will show you on what points you require to rub up. *Rub up*, and canvass him again. Don’t make a jest of this *trial work*. Go at it in earnest, for it is very important to you. Nothing will contribute more to your success, if you are inexperienced, than just this *self-training*. Better practice on your baby, or your dog, or your grandmother’s picture, than not to practice at all. Select the *briefest, clearest, strongest* language you can command, and use the *same identical words*, as nearly as possible, every time until they become *natural* to you. This done, a little actual canvassing will enable you to give your whole thought to the MANNER of your descriptions; the MATTER of them will come spontaneously. You will then be, indeed, *master of the situation*.

#### OPENING THE CAMPAIGN.

11. *The Value of Influence.*—It is recorded of St. Augustine that, being asked, “What is the first step in religion?” he replied, “Humility.” “The second step?” “Humility.” “The third step?” “Humility.” If you should ask as to the progressive steps of success in canvassing, we should have to answer with a similar iteration, *influence! INFLUENCE! INFLUENCE!* Your grand end and aim—your whole business, in truth—must be to *acquire* and *wield* INFLUENCE. You can convince the most obstinate, mollify the most prejudiced and win the most crabbed, if you

can only bring to bear *enough* INFLUENCE of the *right kind*. There are many sources of influence besides your own powers of description. You must avail yourself of each and all of them.

12. *Influential Names to Head Your List*.—These you *must* secure, cost what effort it may. Right here is the GREAT TURNING-POINT OF SUCCESS. Every old agent understands this perfectly. Do not imagine that you are smart enough or lucky enough to prove an exception to the invariable rule. *You are not*. Start right! Get a few leading names to head your list, and your success is assured. This is not *theory*. It is *fact*, *philosophy*, UNIVERSAL EXPERIENCE. Society everywhere follows its leaders, and only its leaders. The great majority of people are afraid to trust their own unaided judgment about buying a book; but show them that Dr. A. and Rev. Mr. B., or Judge C. and Prof. D., or Col. E. and 'Squire F., or better still, all of these, have taken your work, and you will decide them immediately. They will feel really *proud* to be on your list in *such* company.

13. *Whom to Select*.—It is worth your careful thought to decide *whose* influence will help you the *most*. A certain physician may be the best man in town to head your list for a medical work, but be worth little if you had, instead, a religious book. In the latter case, you would first get the influence of clergymen, of course. Selling a popular law-book, you would want a judge or prominent lawyer to lead off; and so on. The more leading names you can get, the better; but, as a rule, three to five will answer every essential purpose.

14. *How to Manage It*.—Your proper bearing, etc., in approaching these persons (as well as others) will be mentioned in our directions for the "general canvass," "showing your book," etc. Do your best to

induce each of them to take your book at full price; but if one of them should higggle and ask for a discount, allow it cheerfully, on condition that he will treat the matter as strictly confidential. Admit freely that his name is worth considerable to you, and you are willing to allow something for it. Do NOT *voluntarily* offer to make him a discount. If you do, four chances to one he will still refuse, and you will feel *thoroughly mean*, all for nothing.

15. *Wringing Victory from Defeat*.—If after your best endeavors, one of your chosen “leaders” should still decline to buy, though pleased with your book, *change your tactics* immediately. Tell him you know how much he is looked up to in the community, and ask him, since he cannot give you his order, to favor you with his *written opinion* of the work, for the sake of its *influence* (see Section 17). Thus appealed to, almost every person will not only feel *complimented*, but will begin to take a *personal interest* in you; and in a majority of cases you will get the writing you suggest. If the gentleman (to save time or trouble) offers to give you a *complimentary subscription* instead of a testimonial, take it unhesitatingly. It will answer your purpose just as well. Do not take it, however, unless he honestly believes it to be a work of merit (as he *will* do, if you show it properly); as, otherwise, it would be a *deception* upon both his part and yours.

16. *Keep a Good Heart and be Careful*.—Do not be discouraged if you should not get the names of *all* those you first selected to head your list. Perhaps you have enough as it is; if not, select others and secure *them*. But on *no account* permit yourself to begin with *inferior* names; and if, by chance, any such should offer at this stage, have them put down on the *third* or *fourth* page of your order-book.



If one of the most influential "leaders" happens to be out of town, *reserve* a line for his name at or near the *head* of the list. When you at last find him, you can turn this to good account and make of it an extremely neat and *effective* compliment.

17. *Testimonials*.—Secure all of these that you can from persons of *influence* at every stage of the canvass; but especially in starting. They carry the *most* weight when written on a separate sheet; but it will sometimes be *easier* to get them by handing your order-book to the individual and letting him write in that what he wishes to say. Testimonials should always be *brief* and *to the point*. Two or three *strong, ringing adjectives*, in characterizing your book, are worth more than a page of *description* of it. Always be ready to suggest the wording of a testimonial yourself, in case you should be called upon or find it advisable to do this.

18. *Newspaper Notices*.—*Never postpone* the commencement of your canvass to secure a newspaper notice. A cheap "puff" will be of no benefit to you at any time. What you want (if you want anything in this line) is one or two short and spicy paragraphs, for two or three successive weeks, not a long, prosy article, made up wholly of description. A book notice should not tell too much. It should be framed with a view to *exciting curiosity*. Never publish the price of your book unless this happens to be one of its particularly strong features. Never mention that you are the agent, or that there is any agent for the work in that community; if you do, people will *see* that the editor is writing for pay, and the notice will lose its effect. Do not spend money in putting ADVERTISEMENTS in the papers until you have learned the business thoroughly, and can judge intelligently whether it will pay you. Generally, it will *not*.



19. *Getting a Helper.*—By a helper, in this business, is understood some *well-known* citizen of good standing, whom the agent hires to go around with him and introduce him to customers. This is a most important source of influence, if the agent is a stranger. Some publishers bind their canvassers to work exclusively on this plan, which is especially applicable in the case of high-priced publications. A smart agent for a good book of low or medium price can be *his own helper*. If you employ a helper, remember that what you pay him for is simply to introduce you. You must do *all* the *canvassing* yourself. Do *not* let him waste your time by introductions not strictly in the way of business, or by prolonging an interview after your business with a customer is finished. A helper will be of the *most* service during the first day or two of the canvass.

#### THE GENERAL CANVASS.

20. *The Philosophy of Canvassing.*—If you have faithfully carried out the directions thus far given, you are now ready to begin the general canvass. Do it at once. But are you sure that you understand the *philosophy of canvassing*? Blundering in any business is bad; in canvassing it is fatal. Mark well, therefore, that canvassing properly includes

FIRST—GAINING A HEARING.

SECOND—CREATING DESIRE.

THIRD—TAKING THE ORDER.

These three steps are *progressive*. Don't try to take them all at once, but strictly in their proper succession. "*One thing at a time, and that done well,*" must be your motto. And remember that if you fail to gain a hearing, you fail of everything; if you gain

a hearing, yet fail to create desire, you *might as well* have failed in everything—you will not effect a sale.

21. *Two Axioms.*—Let these two axioms be deeply graven on your mind's tablet: *First*, DESIRE MUST PRECEDE DEMAND. *Second*, DESIRE IS NEVER SPONTANEOUS. In other words, a person must *desire* your book, or he will not buy; and he never will desire it *until you have shown him what it is*, and pointed out its *many excellences*. Bearing these *cardinal truths* in mind, you will see, at a glance, what a fearful blunder it would be to poke your book at a man, and then blurt out the question, "Don't you want to subscribe?" *Of course* he does not; it is almost impossible, at this stage, that he should. But show him, in the proper manner, what it is, and he *will* want it. Always? No, not always, but in a *large majority* of cases he will.

22. *Gaining a Hearing.*—If you have a helper, he, of course, will manage this for you. Working without a helper (as most who use this manual will do), you must help yourself. To do this well, so as to create a *favorable first impression*, is of prime consequence. Before making a call on *any* person, ascertain his name, his age and circumstances in life. (Your inquiries on these, as on *all* points, should be quiet and business-like, for you do not want to set the whole town agog.) Address him BY NAME, in a respectful, cheerful tone, and ask him if he is at leisure for a few moments. This manly yet deferential approach will conciliate him and *beget confidence*. If you find him busy, add promptly that you do not wish to interrupt him now, but would be glad to know when you can find him disengaged. Most likely he will ask your business. Do not tell him. Answer, pleasantly, that, as he is evidently occupied, you prefer not to mention it now, but will call again, when you hope

to find him more at leisure. The best time for you to call being suggested, retire immediately, touching your hat and bidding him good-day. What have you gained? A great deal; excited his *curiosity*, and paved the way to an *interested* interview. In a word, you have *begun* to acquire INFLUENCE over him.

23. *Following Up Your Advantage*.—Having found your customer at leisure (whether at the first call or subsequently), and after accosting him *by name*, tell him what *your* name is, and say quickly that you are introducing a valuable work in his town (or township, or street, or whatever it may be), and would like to show it to him. If you have been given his name by some one else, be sure to add that Mr. A., or Dr. B., or 'Squire C., or Col. D. (as the case may be) referred you to him as a gentleman fond of good books. This will prove gratifying to his feelings, but it will also have the effect, almost, of a recommendation of yourself to him by the person you name. He will probably manifest some real interest by this time. If so, you are making fine progress; your INFLUENCE over him is in the ascendant.

24. *Creating Desire*.—Now comes the test of your ability as a canvasser. Proceed immediately to show your book—that is, to give your customer such an understanding and appreciation of it that he will *desire to possess it*. Don't talk *about* your book, but *SHOW IT*. And show it in a proper manner. Fumbling the leaves, or any other exhibition either of *awkwardness* or of *indifference*, is not a proper manner. Be earnest, be enthusiastic, be decisive. There is untold INFLUENCE in the manner. Remember, however, that you must *really feel* what you wish to communicate; enthusiasm can *not* be stimulated. And you *will* feel it if you have taken pains to “*organize victory*.”



25. *Keep the Book in Your Own Hands.* Possession is power. Surrender the book, and you lose the power of showing it. You will be led, instead of leading. This you must NEVER willingly permit. Strive to "keep the upper hand" all through. As nearly as possible, do all the thinking, talking, deciding, that there is to be done, *yourself*. Aim to make your INFLUENCE a *controlling* one.

#### SHOWING YOUR BOOK.

26. *Feature by Feature.*—You cannot show up your *whole* book at once. Take it feature by feature, bringing out clearly the novelty, the value or the beauty of each, and making a *point*, if possible, of every one. We give you some hints. Read the title-page, in whole or in part; tell who the author is—his titles (if any), his standing, *special* qualifications for writing such a book, his previous works, etc.; give as good an idea as you can, in *few* words, of the contents and scope of the work; point out, *most particularly*, those features in which it is superior to other books on similar subjects; direct attention to that chapter, or those two or three chapters, in the table of contents (or in the book), which you judge will specially interest the customer you are *now* dealing with; show him how well the book is printed, bound, etc.; and make *much* of the illustrations, if any. (You can often *kindle* his interest better by an animated description of the engravings than in any other way.) In short, try to make him see the book with *your* eyes, and appreciate it accordingly. You will now realize the benefit of your hard work in "organizing victory." You are *master* of the subject. Your customer feels this; he cannot help it. What you say carries weight. Every new *point* you succeed in making increases your INFLUENCE over him.



27. *Make Your Points Clearly.*—Use the very best language you can command—concise, direct, forcible. Most of your sentences should be short. Some of them should come out almost like the crack of a pistol. Choose your *adjectives* with especial care. Accumulate a copious stock of these, and use them with precision. Few things are more ridiculous or *tiresome* than to hear a person incessantly repeating such terms as “elegant,” “splendid,” “grand,” in all his descriptions. Talk fluently, in a distinct and cheerful tone of voice, but avoid bombast and exaggeration. Whenever possible, *excite curiosity*, without gratifying it fully. Your “word-painting” should be particularly animated—calculated to stir the feelings and kindle the imagination. In all *such* passages, study *dramatic effects*.

28. *Making the Most of Your “Points.”*—Not all your “points” will tell as you thought they would. But *some* of them will, and this is all you want. Books are seldom bought for what they are as a whole, but for some *particular feature* or *features* they contain. And tastes differ. Acquire the faculty of judging beforehand what will most *strike* in different kinds of customers. Don’t spend time on features that you see your customer is *incapable* of understanding. When you *have* made a point, follow it up earnestly and skillfully. Say that another feature of the work, equally valuable, is so and so; another so and so; and so on. One of the great masters of forensic eloquence once remarked that the whole secret of his success was his study of the “art of putting things.” See to it that you *put* everything in the *very best* manner you know how.

29. *Printed Testimonials.*—Here you have a rich mine of INFLUENCE. Work it well. Say, in substance: “I want to show you what the *very highest*

authorities think of this work. Here is what So-and-So says. [Reading.] So-and-So gives it equal praise." [Reading.] And so on. There is *everything* in reading a testimonial properly—that is, *effectively*. Don't drawl or drone. Bring out the sentences with a *ring* in them. Words and phrases of praise emphasize *strongly*. Always explain *whose* recommendation it is you are about to read, give prominence to his titles, and see that his *special fitness* to judge of the work is understood. Read only the best and most effective testimonials, and of these, *if long*, give only the *pith*.

30. *Economize Time*.—Your time is precious. Study *brevity* in your descriptions. Don't read long extracts. Don't suffer yourself to be led into long digressions on *any* subject. Don't spend time on any feature after you see your *point* is clearly understood.

31. *Objections*.—These will come in all sorts of shapes. But there never was an objection raised that couldn't be answered in *some* way. There never will be. *Expect* objections! They are inseparable from your business. But learn to *meet them*. In a *multitude* of cases you will find them mere bugaboos. (See Supplement.) If interrupted by a question, or a querulous remark, that you are not ready to consider, let it pass unheeded, or say, pleasantly, "We shall come to that in a little while, Mr. ——— (or something of that sort), and, in the *same breath*, resume your description.

32. *The Price*.—Don't name the price, if you can help it, until you have succeeded in *creating desire*. You can *then* make a strong point by reminding your customer *how much more* the information in your book is worth than the small price at which we furnish it. Make this point still stronger by explaining *why* the publishers have fixed so moderate a price. (See circulars of your book, and back of "Guarantee"

or "Subscribers' " cards.) If asked the price before you are ready to name it, *ignore* the question, if possible. If *obliged* to answer, do it in some general way, as, "Well, most books on subjects of this kind, you know, Mr. ———, are sold at from \$— to \$—; but we don't ask any such price as that." And go right on with your description, and change, if possible, the current of his thoughts.

33. *Using a Prospectus*.—If you are using a prospectus, be sure your customer clearly understands how much larger the book itself will be. Show him the specimen back or backs on the inside of the covers. He will thus see the *thickness* of the book, as well as the different backs (and different bindings).

34. *Local Testimonials*.—We have already (Section 17) mentioned the importance of written testimonials from influential persons among the community you are canvassing. *Use them freely*. There are two ways of doing this. One is to produce them in *connection* with your showing-up of the respective features of your book—in about this way: This, Mr. ———, is the feature that Dr. So-and-So was especially interested in; you can see what he says about it here. This is a *written testimonial* from the doctor." [Reading.] Or, "Mr. So-and-So was greatly struck with this feature of the book. He took the trouble to give me his opinion in writing (which I felt was very kind), and this is what he says." [Reading.] Skillfully introduced in this way, *local testimonials* are very effective. Read them impressively throughout, so as to make the most of what they say of *other* features also.

Another way of using them, rarely so advantageous, however, is to bring them all in after you are *through* showing the book. You say: "I find this book *highly* appreciated by the best informed and most



cultivated persons. Rev. Mr. So-and-So, for instance, expressed great admiration of it. He said so and so. He even took the trouble to give me a written testimonial. You can see what he says here. [Reading it yourself.] Prof. So-and-So was equally well pleased, only, you see, he words it a little differently." [Reading.] And so on. *Local, personal* INFLUENCE of this kind it is *impossible* for any one to resist entirely.

35. *Your Subscription-List.*—Here you will soon find is the very *concentration* and *climax* of INFLUENCE. Say, "Let me show you what I have been doing with this work," and, as you speak, turn to the list. Call especial attention to the *most influential* names, and point them out to your customer. The effect of showing a long list of familiar names in this way is *absolutely wonderful*. *No person* is proof against it. *Old book agents*, and even publishers themselves, will succumb to it, when all other tactics fail. Thousands and thousands of times it has won the day—that is, gained an order—when *all* at first seemed *hopeless*. These are *facts*, and there is a profound philosophy behind them. It is this: *Example* is the most powerful INFLUENCE in the world, and a subscription-list is *example repeated over and over again*. As you *follow up* this business, you will come to rely *more and more* upon the influence of your subscription-list. We *know* it. Mark the words!

#### SECURING THE ORDER.

36. *The Supreme Moment.*—Up to this time, you have carefully abstained from pressing your customer to buy. Your whole effort has been directed to the one prime object of *creating desire*. But now comes the supreme moment. "Subscribe" is an odious



word to many persons. Therefore, *never use it*. Instead of asking, "Will you subscribe," say, "I should be glad to have *your* order, also, Mr. ———; your name will be in good company, you see. It comes next after your neighbor, Mr. So-and-So," or "on the next page after 'Squire So-and-So,' or something of this sort. With this, place the prospectus or order-book squarely before him. Let your manner be composed, yet earnest; equally removed from hesitation or doubt on the one hand, and precipitancy or anxiety on the other. Exert your *will-power* and *personal magnetism* to the utmost. Unless your customer is a very uncommon character, you can influence him greatly at this juncture, and this the more easily for the reason that you are not now asking him for his money, but for his *name*.

37. *If He Hesitates*.—If he hesitates, do not *startle* him into refusing you by abruptly poking your pencil at him, but continue, in a pleasant, off-hand way, "Mr. ———, your name makes the twentieth order that I have taken," or "my third order this morning," or something of that kind. "I expect to have a very encouraging report to send in this week. Please write your name *there*, on *that* line" (pointing to it). Then, if his *manner* indicates acquiescence, hand him your pencil. (See Section 50.)

38. *What Binding to Sell*.—If your book is published in several bindings, always sell the *higher-priced* ones, if possible. There is no better evidence of *good work* in canvassing than a large percentage of orders for the finer bindings. These not only *pay the agent* far the best, but the CUSTOMER is invariably *better satisfied* with his bargain. On *high-priced* books, issued in several bindings (such as family Bibles, etc.), some agents prefer to make sure of the order on a low-priced style *first*, and, after that, to

*talk the customer up* to a fine binding, by showing the vastly greater desirability of the latter, on the score of *durability* or *elegance*, or on account of its special *appropriateness* for the use intended. Or, they appeal to the customer's *pride*, as he will seldom feel *easy* to be outdone by one of his neighbors in the same rank of life. But with most books this plan will not answer; you must talk *best binding from the start*. If using guarantee cards, always fill in the blank for the price before handing to your customer.

39. *Setting the Time for Delivery*.—Most persons will subscribe more readily when the delivery is put somewhat in the future; just how much will depend on circumstances. If *very far* ahead, however, you will lose too many orders, at delivery, by the death, removal or insolvency of customers. Generally speaking, the proper length of time to allow will be from three to six weeks. Family bibles and other high-priced works of a *standard* character, are often sold three or four months in advance. Among a farming population, the most advantageous time of all the year for delivering books is when the crops, or hogs, or wool, and the like, are being marketed. In towns, you will find it best to deliver during the middle or latter part of the month, as rents and other bills are not apt to be pressing at that time. If in a manufacturing place, arrange your delivery with reference to pay-days at the shops.

40. *Don't Bind Yourself to a Day*.—Be careful not to set any *particular day* for delivery. Twenty things may occur to prevent your fulfillment of an engagement so exact as that, and some of your subscribers be tempted to take advantage of you by refusing their books. Say that you expect to deliver *about* such and such date; or, some time during the week commencing such and such day; or something

else of a *general* character. Always give your subscribers to understand, politely but plainly, that you expect the money to be ready for you when you come round, as time will be *more than usually valuable* to you when delivering books. This is true, of course, for you will then be *on expenses*.

*Two Deliveries.*—Two or more deliveries are allowable when canvassing *different classes* in the same city or town, or *different parts* of the same township, if near home. Otherwise, *never* arrange for more than one delivery. *Close up your business as you go.*

42. *After the Order Is Taken.*—Be careful that your customer's *last impression* of you is a good one. If you see that he is busy, thank him for his kindness in affording so much of his valuable time, make your bow or touch your hat, and retire forthwith. If he is not busy, chat with him a few moments longer, and show him more particularly than before what you *know* to be strong points in your book, and its superiority to all others on similar subjects. By these little attentions, you will greatly strengthen his confidence in you; and he will begin now to take a lively interest in seeing you prosper. All the information that you need about persons or families near by he will gladly communicate, and he will be sure to help you with more than one good word among his neighbors or friends.

#### PRACTICAL HINTS ON SOLICITING.

43. “*Many Men, Many Minds.*”—It is needless to say that the same method cannot always be followed in all its *details*. Not only your *customers*, but also your *opportunities*, will differ, and differ greatly. But once more be assured that the foregoing *principles* and *leading* directions are of *unvarying application*. If you attempt to improve on *these*, you will make



shipwreck or your enterprise as sure as the sun shines in the heavens.

44. *Study Human Nature*.—Some men read the minds of others almost like an open book. To book agents this faculty is INVALUABLE. It is a natural gift in *part*—not *wholly*. All may *cultivate* it, and in no calling whatever are there better opportunities for doing this than in canvassing. Give this point your earnest attention, and you will soon be surprised to see how well you can *divine the thoughts* of your subscribers, and even *anticipate* their objections.

45. "*Cultivate Your Customer*."—Use every honorable method, appropriate to the occasion, to maintain and increase your INFLUENCE. Do not run counter to your customer's beliefs or feelings, or even his prejudices, *unnecessarily*. But never defer to him so far as to allow him to divert you from your *duty*, which is to show your book to the best advantage possible. In canvassing private houses, notice the children, which is the shortest of all avenues to the good opinion of a mother. The older children you should *interest*, if possible. Enlist the good-will of the ladies, and they will often influence a hesitating husband or father in your favor.

46. *Adaptability*.—You will find it a great point to be able to adapt yourself to *different opportunities*. For instance, the customer with but five minutes to spare must be treated in a manner quite different from what would be entirely proper if he could allow you half an hour. For your encouragement, we are glad to assure you that *continued, careful practice* will give you surprising command both of ideas and language, so that you can present your *leading* points forcibly, in very few words.

47. *The Plan for Rapid Work*.—When you see that *rapidity* of work offers you the *only* chance of



effecting a sale, run over the leading points first, *without attempting to amplify*. Then go back to those which seem to *strike* your customer, and enlarge upon them as you deem best. Mention others of a similar nature. *Let the rest go*. Skillfully handled, your customers may often be brought to the *ordering* point very quickly. Experienced canvassers often adopt the plan here suggested in *all* cases.

48. *Your Bearing*.—Let this be open, frank and manly. Never cringe, never fawn, never whine. You are engaged in a legitimate and honorable business. By every look and word show that you not only know this, but *feel* it. Always look your customer *straight in the face*. Otherwise, you cannot possibly read his thoughts nor do *yourself justice* in any way.

49. *Some Be's to Be Kept About You*.—You do not need lecturing. But there are some things so important that we shall not apologize for reminding you of them.

*Be self-possessed and fertile in expedients*. A laugh or a look will sometimes help you more than learning or logic. Good-natured *bantering* will occasionally prove your “best card.” *Telling a story* is a dangerous expedient, but if you are *sure* you can do it well, you will be justified in trying it now and then.

*Be hopeful in mind*, that you may be cheerful in manner. Never despair of securing an order while the chance is left you of *talking*. And strive to carry *sunshine* with you—enough, indeed, to *warm* the most frigid soul you may be brought into contact with.

*Be persevering*. An occasional order from one who “never subscribes” will help you immensely from this very circumstance. If one of this class gives you only *half* a chance, make up your mind to get him, and don't leave him *till you do*.

*Be courteous* always and everywhere. This is just as important for its "reflex influence" on yourself as for its influence on others. You must be *habitually* respectful and polite, or you cannot develop the self-reliance, or even the self-respect, which is absolutely *essential* to success in your calling.

50. *Some Equally Important Do Not Be's.*—Do not be caught saying ill-natured or spiteful things about rival agents. Proper regard for the truth, however, will sometimes compel you to expose humbuggery and imposition. Do it by stating the *facts* in the case as simply and pointedly as possible, and let the public judge for themselves. By this course, you will conserve your self-respect and win many friends.

*Do not be too easily put off.* "No" is not *always* an answer in canvassing any more than in courting. Remember that some natures are naturally slow to act, and others are timid and self-distrustful. In either case, they need to be "labored with" for their own good.

*Do not be either afraid or ashamed to talk.* This is the way sales are effected in all kinds of business. People *expect* you to talk. You *ought* to talk. You cannot do *justice* to yourself, your book or your publishers unless you do talk. But *talk to the point*. Entertain and *instruct* your customer, if possible. (See Section 27.)

*Do not be betrayed into a quarrel*, no matter what the provocation. By flying into a passion, you put yourself at great disadvantage at the time, and will feel *mean* after it is over. It is a good thing, sometimes, not to *hear* an insulting remark. If you feel *obliged* to notice such a remark, you can generally answer most effectively by stating *facts* in such a way as will make the other party feel ashamed of himself.

If you *must* resort to sarcasm, let it be pointed with *punctilious politeness*. After all, people are to be pitied rather than blamed for lack of breeding. Boorishness is nearly always the offspring of ignorance.

51. *Scorn Misrepresentation*.—Do not impose on credulity or ignorance. Do not palm off wood engravings or lithographs for steel plates, a cloth binding for something better, a French or German morocco for Levant Turkey. Do not make the unsophisticated believe that smudgy, cheap mezzo-tinting is finer and more costly than line or line and stipple engraving. Do not pretend to be paid a *salary* when really working on a commission. (On this point simply say *nothing*.) Thousands of copies of an inferior book have been sold in this country, within a few years, by young women *trained* to represent themselves as sisters of the author, and as such, to work, in certain ways, on the *sympathies* of the public. Scorn all such baseness. “The art of putting things” is worth your best endeavors. (See Section 28.) But *lying* is not an *art*; anybody who is mean enough can practice *that*.

#### GENERAL MANAGEMENT.

52. *The Secret of Large Profits*.—Canvass closely, thoroughly, *exhaustively*. This is the *great secret* of money making in the book business. It may require *much* longer to canvass a given territory than you expected. Never mind; *take* the time. Your business is not getting over territory. It is *selling books*, and the more books you can place *in a given area*, the more money you will make. Nearly all beginners in this business work too fast. Guard this point. Do not slight one family, office, store or shop because you think yourself hurried. And see that you spend



enough time with each to show your work *properly*. When an agent writes us, "I called on *fifty* families yesterday, and only sold one book," we say to ourselves, "It is the next thing to a *miracle* that you sold *any*." In a farming community, from *ten to twenty* calls constitute a full day's work. In towns, the range will be considerably larger.

53. *Be Systematic*.—We give you a few hints on this head: Before starting out in the morning, always decide where you will go first and what shall be the general plan for the day's work. Always carry a *small* private memorandum-book, in which note carefully, *at the time*, all business items of interest, such as the names of persons not at home, when and where to make second calls on persons too busy to see you the first time, pay-days at shops, etc. Every evening go over these memoranda carefully, and *fix* them in your memory. In canvassing strange localities, inquire the names and circumstances in life of the next three or four families ahead, that you may know how to address them aright. (See Section 22.)

54. *What to Depend On*.—One thing, and *only* one: that is, YOUR OWN EFFORTS. There is no short cut, no royal road, to success in canvassing. Thousands have tried to find one, but they all failed, miserably failed. Personal effort, personal solicitation, personal *talking your book into people*, will do the work. Nothing else will or *can*. (See Sections 62–68.)

55. *Work Steadily*.—Of course you intend to be industrious; or, if not, you had better get out of the business forthwith. See that your diligence is well directed. Make the most of *every day*. Never mind about being thought a *brilliant* worker. Be a *steady* worker, and you may safely depend on proving a SUCCESSFUL one. Do not work spasmodically. Do



not loiter during business hours about hotels, or anywhere else, in conversation which has nothing to do with your business. Do not quit work an hour before dinner, or in the middle of the afternoon, simply because you have found a pleasant stopping-place. Don't lie lazily around at any time, in any place, on any pretense.

56. *Your Main Dependence.*—Do not be in a hurry to deliver your books. Unless circumstances that you cannot control *compel* an early delivery, always give yourself plenty of time to work up a LARGE LIST before ordering. This is the plan that will PAY YOU *far the best*. Always bear in mind that canvassing is the *main thing*. Keep up *that* part of your work, and you will be sure of a good business. (See Section 79.)

#### SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS.

57. *Your Personal Appearance.*—Be neat and cleanly in your attire and person, in order (among other reasons) that first impressions may be in your favor. In canvassing towns and cities, the agent should even *dress well*. The hair and beard should be kept neatly trimmed, the teeth and finger-nails clean and boots genteelly blacked. If smoking be indulged in, let it be in private, when some other than the ordinary business suit may be worn for the time being. Attend to these little matters punctiliously. You will feel better and work better for so doing.

58. *How to Carry Your Outfit.*—Handle your prospectus or sample copy carefully, and keep it clean. In using a sample copy, carry it done up in a piece of strong, thick wrapping-paper, secured with an elastic string or a rubber band (procurable at almost any stationer's), which will be found much more con-

venient than tying it with twine. If preferred, it may be carried in a small satchel, or in a weather-proof case, made of rubber or enameled cloth, suspended by a leather strap over the shoulder. A prospectus, when used alone, is best carried in a small bag buttoned on the inside of the coat, directly under the arm. This will keep it out of sight, and thus enable you to approach *crotchety* people without exciting their prejudice beforehand.

59. *Where and How to Begin.*—Begin wherever you can the most readily secure the kind of INFLUENCE that will help you. If, on this score, all places are alike to you, begin *right where you are*. And begin right! That is, begin among the *best classes*. You *cannot* work upward from below. *Do not attempt it*.

You *can* work from above downward, and that with *certainty of success*. The middle classes of society—persons of moderate incomes and small libraries, with a taste for reading—will generally prove the best book-buyers. Nevertheless, *begin* with the “upper crust,” for the sake of their INFLUENCE.

60. *One at a Time.*—“Avoid, as a pestilence, men in groups, public gatherings and people at court.” That sentence was written for the guidance of his agents by a pioneer in the subscription-book business more than thirty years ago, and the advice is *sound* to the last syllable. *Never* show your book to *any* group, save the members of the same family. One person or one family at a time must be your *invariable* rule, violating which you will secure *undivided attention* but seldom, and a *fair* hearing never.

62. *Five Important Never-Do's*—Never leave your book where any one can get at it during your absence. When not using it, keep it under lock and key.

Never leave your prospectus, or sample copy, with any one else for *him* to show some one and secure you

an order. No matter how good his intentions, he cannot do you justice; he cannot show your book *properly*. You can, for you have studied it and know it thoroughly. Have an appointment made, if possible, and, at the time designated, go around and show it yourself.

Never show your book in any public place where there are many passers-by, nor to any person except at his home or place of business.

Never show your book to a family while entertaining visitors. Rather than this, call a second or even a third time.

Never attempt to show your book when you are tired out. At such times, you cannot do justice to it, to yourself or your employer.

#### WEAKNESSES TO BE AVOIDED.

62. *The Peddling Business*.—Do not dream of better success by *peddling* books. On the subscription plan you can sell three to one. Any other idea is a mistake. "*Book agents, don't do it!*" is the voice we would send from Labrador to Yucatan. If *you* do it, you will soon become disgusted and will quit the business. We *know* it.

63. "*Better Territory*."—There is none! If what you are now in has never before been canvassed for *your* book (often even in cases where it *has* been), it is, in all probability, as good territory as you can find in the State. *Do not* waste your time and money in fruitless *experimenting* on territory. Faithful, vigorous *work* is the only thing that can give you success anywhere, and *that* you can best put in right where you are.

64. *A Large Territory*.—Perhaps no mistake is so common among new agents as *greed* for territory. In



the more thickly-settled parts of the Union, two towns or townships are enough for any agent to *begin* with. *Concentration* of effort is essential to your success, and this, in attempting to cover a large territory, is impossible. *Don't worry about territory.* Bear in mind that one of two things *must* occur: either you will succeed—in which case your employers will be very sure, for their own interests, to ADD to your field all that you can possibly work—or you will not succeed—in which case you will not *want* more territory. We have a number of agents on our “roll of honor” who have sold thousands of books each. Yet only two or three of them *began* with a larger assignment of territory than that above indicated.

65. *Dependence on Circulars.*—Do not imagine that you can make money in the book business by simply distributing circulars. If strong in “testimonials,” and framed to *stimulate curiosity*, circulars are a useful adjunct; but they can never take the place of *personal solicitation*. They are the most helpful, perhaps, in selling a medical work, but even here should be used with judgment. The great objection to circulars is that they allow the customer too much time to think over the matter of subscribing, under *unfavorable* circumstances—circumstances that are *not fair* to you.

66. *Subagents.*—Do not depend on subagents. Unless they accomplish considerable, your profits on their sales will not pay you for the time and attention they require. On the other hand, if they *do* accomplish much, they will soon leave you, and, setting up in business for themselves, will become your most powerful competitors.

67. *Newspaper Puffs.*—Do not expect great things from newspaper puffs. Press notices will generally prove helpful to you, but they are worth nothing unless supplemented by your earnest personal effort.



68. *Announcements.*—Do not build air-castles upon announcements of your work from the pulpit or in a lodge or grange meeting, or anything of that kind. If well managed, these things are valuable, because they do, unquestionably, bring INFLUENCE to your side. They give you a certain amount of prestige. But *always* remember that only personal canvassing can turn these advantages to account. It is the only alchemy that can transmute INFLUENCE of any kind into *orders* and *money*.

#### HINTS FOR SPECIAL CASES.

69. *Class Canvassing (in Cities).*—In working city territory, many old agents canvass *by classes*. For example, they take all the physicians or ministers first; next, all the lawyers, and then, in succession, the teachers, insurance men, bankers, large manufacturers, wholesale dealers, retailers, shops, and so on, down to the humbler private families and common laborers. This is an excellent plan for an agent of experience (especially when selling a work of *medium price*), as it secures *concentration* of influence on each class. The beginner, however, will learn the *points* of the business more rapidly by following the usual method, viz., consecutive or house-to-house canvassing. In country territory, class canvassing is impracticable.

70. *Country Canvassing.*—The cardinal points in working country territory are, to canvass it, first, *thoroughly*, and secondly, *compactly*. Do not follow a turnpike without turning either to the right hand or to the left, across a whole township. Work every township by school districts (as a rule, that in the center first), *district by district*. This is highly important, to the end that you may carry with you the strongest possible amount of *neighborhood* INFLUENCE.

Do not neglect the by-roads. Being slighted by superficial canvassers, they will have been less canvassed, and *may* pay you best of all.

Unless in a sparsely-settled district, you had better canvass on foot. If you are working at a distance from home, and wish to return every night, you can ride to and fro, but should stable your horse during the day.

If too far from home to return every evening, put up with some well-to-do farmer wherever nightfall overtakes you. Pay for your entertainment. This you can generally do by selling your host a book, and *crediting the amount of his bill* as so much paid on it. When you deliver, collect the *balance* in cash.

71. *Learn the Business in Country Territory.*—If you live in the country, or in a rural town, do not *think* of leaving your own community to attempt your *first* canvassing in the city. Hundreds of young men, intelligent and really capable, have we known *commit business suicide* through a lack of judgment on this point. For a new hand, cities constitute the hardest territory in the world. The *first step* in “the philosophy of canvassing,” viz., gaining a hearing, is vastly, almost infinitely, more difficult there than in small places and among farmers. Only a city-bred man, and a man of *superior* business qualifications at that, should ever do his first canvassing in the city.

72. *When Away from Home.*—When operating in a strange place, your first care must be to find a good boarding-house; or, still better, suitable quarters with some respectable private family. Your “headquarters” should be of such character as will *influence* people in your favor.

Keep the *very best* company, and no other. Excite people’s *curiosity* as much as you please, but do not

tell them any more about your business than is really necessary.

Do not talk politics, or make yourself conspicuous by partisanship of any kind. Carefully avoid all manifestations of *sectarianism*.

We earnestly recommend you to go to church on Sunday; and if you add an attendance at Sabbath school, all the better.

If you are a Christian, carry your religion with you. Make yourself at home in the prayer-meetings and at the Y. M. C. A. rooms, if any such are accessible. These things will be a comfort and pleasure to you and relieve your tendency to feel lonesome.

The same principles will apply to attendance at lodge, grange, etc., if you are a Freemason, Odd Fellow, "Patron," or the like.

73. *Canvassing Shops and Factories*.—Here your main difficulty will be encountered at the very threshold. *Gaining entrance* is seldom impossible, though frequently more or less difficult. A note of introduction from some prominent citizen to the Superintendent or Manager, if you can get anything of the kind, will nearly always prove the "open-sesame" you need. Whether with or without this, you must put forth your very best efforts to secure the good-will of the person in charge of the building, whomever he be. In a manner respectful, but *never cringing*, ask permission to canvass the employes, either then or, if he *prefers*, at some other time. Take *his* order, if possible, and get him to introduce you to the foreman or some of the leading workmen. Then go at it in earnest for a *clear sweep* among the hands. Take them one by one, as much as possible. Do not loiter *hinderingly* around. Bring into play all the *adaptability* you possess. See that your subscribers under-



stand exactly what *pay-day* they must have their money ready.

If your utmost diplomacy fails to secure for you an entrance during working hours, be on hand at the *noon* hour, and then do your best and fastest work. (See Sections 46 and 47.)

#### CONCERNING YOURSELF.

74. *Managing Yourself*.—'There is a great deal in knowing how to *manage yourself* properly. We give you some hints.

*Take care of your health*. Dress suitably for the weather. Be particularly careful to keep your feet dry, by wearing good, whole boots or shoes. Economize your strength—by which we mean, use it to the best advantage, not that you should be lazy. In *very hot* weather, rest from 11 A. M. to 2 P. M.

*Never worry about your business*. No matter how things go, do your best, and thus you will be sure of two great blessings—a good appetite and an approving conscience. Acquire the *habit* of looking on the bright side. When things go awry, take comfort in thinking how much worse they *might be*.

*After working hard, a little recreation* of some kind will do you good. Take it, and enjoy it all you can. Work when you work ; rest while you rest. This is the true philosophy for *all* business men, acting on which you will keep yourself *in tone*, and be able to work faithfully the year through. Above all things, do not be forever *brooding* over your business.

*Do not be mercurial*. A run of extraordinary success should not unduly elate you ; nor, on the other hand, should discouragements easily depress you. A *varying* success is what you must expect. Hit or miss, in any particular case, always do your duty



faithfully. *Aggregate* results will then prove satisfactory, almost to a certainty.

*Keep alive your interest in your book.* Study it daily for *new points*. As much as possible, connect it, in your canvass, with items of general information and current news. From first to last, take pains in collecting testimonials in its favor.

75. *Keep Your Own Counsel.*—Learn all you can of what is going on around you, but communicate little. Never make a *parade* of your business, but go about it quietly, and transact it in a business-like way. *Do not talk about your book, except when actually canvassing.* Never mention what commission you are allowed, or whether you work on commission at all. Never discuss your plans with outsiders, nor proclaim them in advance to anybody. You will often wish certain information; nevertheless, except as a *last resort*, do not ask point-blank questions. Strive rather to elicit what you want by turning the conversation into channels which will bring it out naturally; or, by stating your *general impressions* in such a way as to call forth the *facts* in the case, if you are wrong; or by other means, equally efficacious, though not direct.

76. *Have a Mind of Your Own.*—Do not be turned aside from the faithful performance of your duty by what *anybody may say*. You must expect to hear a great many discouraging remarks. People *will* talk. In your case, however, they do not know what they are talking about—at least, most of them do not.

This is none the less true, either, because *they* may conscientiously believe otherwise, and imagine they are advising you for your good. *Do not mind them.* A hundred times we have seen the *determined* agent achieve a fine success in a community where he had been gravely assured he could do nothing.

77. *The Other Side*.—Remember, there are two sides to every question. Learn to look at the “other side.” For example:

If you are told (as you will be, every day) that the times are very hard, and everybody is complaining, bethink yourself whether *your publishers* have not understood this, and gotten up something *suited to the times*.

If you are told that people won't buy anything nowadays that they can't use, call to mind the *useful* and *valuable* features of your book.

If you are told that *so many* books are being canvassed for in this community, etc., set this down (if true) as an evidence that there is an *interest* in books there. All the better chance for the agent with the best and most useful book. Frequent buyers are the most intelligent buyers.

If you are told that people won't buy anything just now that they could do without, examine the statement a moment and you will see that it is *not true*. People *could* do without shoes and go barefoot, but they *don't*. They *could* live on two meals a day, but they *don't*. They *could* dispense with a hundred things of comfort, luxury and convenience, but they *don't* and *won't*. What they *desire strongly*, that they will and do buy. Get them to wanting your book, by showing it *cleverly*, and *they will buy it*. This is the grand and cheering FACT that outweighs all the drawbacks which people may dolefully recount to you.

78. *Your Dealings With the Firm*.—*Mutual confidence and good-will* are the basis of all satisfactory relations in business. Let your dealings with the firm be such as to promote these feelings on both sides. Never lose sight of the fact that your interest and theirs are identical. Consult them freely. Give them credit for *good faith* in what they say and do. If

you *cannot* do this, take our advice and quit their service.

Do not neglect the duty of reporting. This is *important*, though you may not see why; important, most of all, to *you*.

Promptly forward copies of the *best* of the testimonials that you procure for your book. The publishers will often be able to have them printed for you.

If you know any good agents in a neighboring community, send on their names and exact addresses. Your employers will feel *grateful* for little attentions of this kind, and will certainly take an increased interest in you.

#### ORDERING BOOKS.

79. *When to Order*.—Don't be in a *hurry* to begin delivering. *Wholesale* work is what will *PAY* you. The saving of expense (in freights, etc.) is only one of the *minor* advantages which you will gain by ordering and delivering in lots as large as possible. The greatest gain, perhaps, will be your *saving of time*. Remember, canvassing is your main business; delivering is an *interruption*. One delivery of one hundred books will yield you a *net profit from two to four times* greater than ten deliveries of ten books each. Professional canvassers generally work up an entire town or township before ordering books. *This is much the best plan, whenever practicable.*

80. *How to Order*.—Send the amount of your bill with the order if you can spare or raise the money. This plan is the best, *because the cheapest*. As compared with a C. O. D. order (see next section), a cash order will not only save the express company's charges for returning the money, but, whenever you order in lots of some size, will allow the shipment of your books as ordinary freight



81. *C. O. D. Orders.*—C. O. D., as almost everybody knows, means “collect on delivery,” and is the brief term in common use among business men for a shipment made by express, when the bill for the goods accompanies them, and must be paid by the person to whom the goods are sent before the express company will deliver them. As an *accommodation*, we will ship books this way, provided the agent remits (with the order) a reasonable sum of “guarantee money.” This “guarantee money” is fixed uniformly at not less than *10 per cent* of the amount of the bill, except for *long distances*, when it must be not less than *20 per cent*. The C. O. D., of course, will be only for the *unpaid part* of the bill.

82. *A Cash Business.*—Old agents understand that this is, and *must* be, a cash business throughout. For the benefit of beginners, however, we will explain why. *First*, our publications are furnished at prices so moderate as to leave but a small margin after paying our agents. *Second*, our business is conducted almost wholly by correspondence, with parties whom we do not know personally, and hence any other system is impracticable. *Third*, the cash system is a *great safeguard to the agent* against the *ruinous* mistake of *trusting out books*.

Then follow instructions how to order books and send the money.

#### DELIVERING BOOKS.

88. *The Philosophy of Delivering.*—This is very simple, viz.: There is a *contract* existing between your subscriber and yourself. You perform your part of this contract by delivering the book. You expect him to fulfill his part by receiving and paying therefor. It is purely a business transaction. Never treat it, by word, look or manner as though it could possi-



bly be anything else. *Never* say, "I have brought your book; I *hope* you are ready to take;" nor anything of similar import. Never let a customer impose on your *good-nature*, or "back out" from his bargain on *any* pretext, except for reasons the most conclusive, and based on circumstances for which he is in nowise responsible.

89. *In Delivering Work Rapidly*.—Don't linger over a delivery because it is pleasant to be taking in money. Remember, delivery is really so much lost time. *Push it through*, that you may resume your main business, *canvassing*, as soon as possible. It is well, too, to be in something of a hurry, for the sake of its *moral effect* on your doubtful subscribers.

90. *Serving the Book*.—Let your manner be courteous, but thoroughly self-possessed and decided. In a word, be business-like. Never show the least misgiving that the customer will give you trouble. Say that you have brought his book, as per agreement, and he will find it a treasure indeed (or something of that kind). Look him full in the face, and hand him the book.

If a customer tries to "beg off" from taking his book, cut him short by telling him that he *agreed* to take the book, and, as you take it for granted he is a *man of his word*, you expect him to do so; and the more, as you have ordered this copy *expressly for him*.

Occasionally, a subscriber may *really* imagine that what you have brought him is not exactly what he ordered. Show him pleasantly, in as few words as possible, that it *is* the same, and that you intend to hold him to his contract.

Never threaten to sue a subscriber, except as a last resort; and not even then, unless determined to carry out the threat and make an example of him.

91. *Trusting Out Books.*—"To *everything* there is a season," says the wise man. But Solomon was not an old book agent, or he would have made at least one exception. The season to *trust out books* is *never!* NEVER! NEVER! To do that would RUIN you. *Don't* do it, we *implore* you. Even if your money is *safe*; it will cost you *more than it is worth to collect it*. You might be able to make a living by digging cisterns at \$1 a foot, splitting rails at 80 cents per hundred or sawing wood at 75 cents per cord; but you can *not*—positively, absolutely can *not*—make a living at this business if you trust out books to any extent.

"As close as sin and suffering joined"

will be the practice of trusting out books, with vexation, disappointment, disgust, disaster. *Do not imagine your case an exception.* All the rest thought so of theirs, and not until they had lost in time and money, nobody knows how much, did they realize their stupendous *folly* in refusing the advice of *those who knew*.

92. *Depositing Books.*—Never deposit books to be called for by subscribers. *Not one in twenty* of your customers will ever call. Personal service is the only safe and certain plan in delivering, the same as it is in canvassing.

93. *Close Up the Business as You Go.*—Use your utmost tact to carry out this direction. If a customer has not the money ready, try and get him to borrow it. You can frequently suggest some person to whom he can apply, and, in many cases, can even go with him. If borrowing is not feasible, and you know his *credit* to be good, take his due-bill for the amount, and sell or trade it as soon as you can—if necessary, at a small discount. (You can often turn it in in paying

your board-bill.) Always *impress* upon an unprepared customer how seriously it will inconvenience you to have to call again. But call again you must, if you cannot get money and are afraid to take a due-bill. On no account risk leaving the book. If you are forced to risk *anything*, let it rather be the loss of the order. While the book is in your hands, it is worth to you all you paid for it; but once part with it, and you know not whether it will be worth *anything*. This is usually as true of *acquaintances* as of other persons. In fact, some acquaintances will *presume* on your friendship, and keep you waiting longer than they would a stranger.

94. *Making Up Lost Orders*.—A small amount of *shrinkage* is to be expected in delivering any average list. If, however, more than *four per cent* of your orders prove bad, there is *something wrong* in your methods of operating. Your losses should be confined almost wholly to the death, removal or insolvency of customers between the time you took the orders and the date of delivery. You can always make up for such losses by selling a few books outright, while delivering.

95. *Keeping Your Order-Book*.—Check off (thus, X) the names of subscribers as they pay you. Unless it be *badly* soiled, use the same canvassing-book until quite full. Thus can you make the most of the *powerful INFLUENCE of your subscription-list*, which latter will be of immense service, no matter though your next canvassing be done in another community. For similar reasons, whenever you replace an old canvassing-book with a new one, copy into the latter several pages of your best names. *Never* forget that, for you, the “philosopher’s stone” is neither more nor less than—INFLUENCE.



## SUPPLEMENT.

Do not DIRECTLY answer objections at all, unless you see that no other procedure will meet the case. If you can, pass them by unheeded, going right on with your description of your book in your most lively and interesting style.

Never be captious, peevish, or overbearing in answering objections. Never get into a *wrangle* with a customer. To win the argument is to lose the sale; he will feel provoked, and be sure not to buy. The best answer possible will often be an *indirect* one; as, by an illustration, a *short* and *pointed* anecdote, or even by a little *good-natured* raillery.

Different objections, it is needless to say—and even the *same* objections from different customers—must be met in different ways. Experience will improve you wonderfully in this line, if you are at all quick-witted and persevering. Make a SPECIAL STUDY of the objections raised, and also of the methods by which you have been meeting them. You will frequently be able to *think out* better answers, and *next time* get the order.

We append some of the more common objections, with appropriate answers:

“*I am opposed to the whole principle of selling books by subscription.*” The time was when I thought and said the same. But I found, when I came to look into the matter, that some of the very best books ever published in this country were got out on the subscription plan. [Here name Greeley’s American Conflict, Christ in Art, Appleton’s Cyclopædia, Picturesque America, Irving’s Life of Washington, or others that you may be acquainted with, and that will probably influence the customer. If *necessary*, you can then speak of the advantages of the subscription plan, the



convenience of having the books brought to the buyer, etc.] I am opposed to selling a mean, bad book, in any way; but in circulating such a work as this, the best men in this community have told me that I am doing a good work, and that is exactly how I feel about it.

“*The country is over-run with book agents; I am bored to death with them.*” There are a great many agents in this neighborhood, but none of them have *this* work; and I find that intelligent people, like yourself, generally think very highly of it—all the better for the *contrast* which it affords to others. Allow me to show you, Mr. —, two or three features, which will give you a good idea of what it really is.

“*The times are too hard.*” Yes, the times *are* hard. But *our* book has been gotten up to *suit* the times; and it is a fact, sir, that it is selling finely, where *most* books won’t go at all. One feature that I find people generally like very much is so and so. [Show it, and go right on to show *other* features.]

“*If I were able, I would like to order a copy.*” Knowledge is *power*, you know, sir. A general knowledge of things increases our influence over those we deal with, and this increases our facilities for making money. The purchase of a work like this is *really* an investment in what will be the most likely to secure for you *financial success*.

“*I have no time to read; if I had, I would like it.*” But you have a family, Mr. —. I am sure you are anxious to give *them* a good start in life. In what other way could you do *so much* with the same money, in training their minds, as in putting the *fund* of *useful* and *valuable* information which this book contains in their possession? They will *prize* it, *study* it, and *learn much* from it. And, no doubt, Mr. —,

*you* would find time to read it, too, if it were *always within your reach*.

"*The book is too dear.*" A great mistake, sir. It is *thirty per cent* cheaper than *any school-book* you can purchase as the book stores. And school-books *ought* to be the cheapest books made, because almost every child in the land must buy one. It is really from *ten to twenty per cent* cheaper than many works of inferior merit, and less cost of manufacture, that you see at the *book stores*. [Always have some in your mind to which you can refer, and thus clinch your answer.]

Or : By no means. You must consider, Mr. —, that this is a new and *first-class* work in every respect, and, especially, that the publishers have to pay the author a heavy copyright, or royalty, as some people term it, on every copy they sell. You have no idea, perhaps, of the copyright that some authors are paid. Dr. Kane received \$1 a copy on his "*Arctic Explorations*;" Washington Irving, \$1.15 on his "*Life of Washington*;" and though I do not know *exactly* what the copyright on this work is, it is a heavy one. Consider, too, the style in which it is gotten up. It will be an ornament to your library or center-table. You will take pride in showing it to your friends.

Or, if it be a medical or legal work, you can make a *telling* point by showing how *high* books on technical and scientific subjects come in the stores. Yet *this* book is put at a price that would be low even if it were on *commonplace* topics.

"*When I am ready, I can get a copy at the book store.*" If you can, and do, you will support *dishonesty* in trade. For the publishers do not sell to the book trade at all; they sell only *direct* to the people, through their regular agents. When booksellers get any of *our* books, it is by BRIBING some unprincipled agent to fill their orders for them.

“*I never subscribe ; I don't like the plan.*” I suppose you give your *order* for a pair of boots or shoes sometimes, and, if they fit you, you take them when finished, and pay the price agreed on. That is *exactly* the plan that I am working on. You give me your order, and I deliver you the article at a certain price and time. It is really one of the *commonest* plans for transacting business in the world, and a very good one, as it is an accommodation to *both* parties.

“*I bought [some trashy book] once, and found I was completely sold.*” Yes, that *was* a poor affair. No agent of *good sense* and *good principle* ever could handle *that* book. That is one of the kind of books we are *crowding out* of the market. People *discriminate* in buying books now, and I am *glad* of it; it gives this work the *preference* over all others. You will see [then go right on to show your book.]

“*A book agent cheated me once, and since then I won't have anything to do with them.*” You have sometimes bought a hat or pair of boots that wore right out, and you felt that you were cheated, badly cheated; yet you have bought boots and hats since then, and very sensibly, too; for it would be foolish, indeed, to go bareheaded and barefooted all your days for fear of being *cheated again*.

Or, if you are using a sample copy to canvass with:— I suppose you are willing to trust your *own eyes*. Here is a copy of the work *complete* in every particular. You see *exactly* what you are ordering. If you choose, you may take this copy into another room, and put any private mark on it you please, so that when I deliver your copy you can look at the mark, and know it is the same sample that you ordered from.

“*How do I know that the book will be as good as your sample ?*” Answer this as above. Or explain the guarantee given in the printed sentence at the



head of your subscription-list, or in your "Guarantee (or Condition) Cards."

"*I may not have the money when you deliver.*" No fear about that. A careful man, such as I take you to be, never has any trouble about the money. The time of the delivery is so far ahead that you have plenty of time to be prepared for it. I will take that risk fifty times a day, Mr. —.

"*I can borrow my neighbor's book.*" You might as well borrow his clock or stove. You are surely joking. You are too independent for that, I am sure.

"*I cannot order now, but very likely I will take a copy when you deliver.*" *Do not be put off with this excuse.* Say that you only bring as many books as are engaged, and do not carry any extra copies; that this will be his only chance to get the work; that you are the only one selling it in that county or township, and that it cannot be had in any other way; and thus get him to give you his order. *Place no dependence whatever upon indefinite promises like the above.* Nail the matter then and there, or you will never do it.

#### GETTING AGENTS.

The publishers advertise for agents, and have hundreds of applicants. The country is filled, and has been since the war, with people who can't get into regular work, and prefer to carry on this assault upon the general purse rather than make an effort in some settled way. The plan of operations begins with thoroughly understanding the book in hand. Then a suitable "piece" must be learned by heart, with such changes of argument as are required with the different men who are canvassed. Long practice makes perfect



in this preliminary part. Then the agent seeks the field, and first secures the leading men of the region.

SUBSCRIBE BECAUSE PROMINENT MEN DO.

Judge R., Prof. K., Rev. Mr. D. and Editor Y. Z. are generally placed at the top of the list, to give character to the work and induce others to sign. It is surprising how many men will subscribe for a useless book merely because an influential neighbor has done so. In a great many instances, where it is impossible to induce prominent men to really take the work, their names are solicited simply for effect, and are put down through a thoughtlessness that is fatal to many. Such heedless signers are caught in nine cases out of ten, for if they once put their names to the book, under any circumstances, they are holden, and agents generally forget to erase the stool-pigeons' signatures. An influential man who will sign for a book just to get rid of the agent ought to be captured at his own game every time. It is "influence" that the agent wants, and can't get along without. The class of men chosen depends entirely on the nature of the work in hand. If it is a religious book (and those sell best), the agent grabs after every clergyman in town. If the minister is poor, and can't afford the book, the canvasser gets him to "indorse the enterprise" by signing his name as a subscriber. It is generally customary, with a preacher who has standing, to present him with a copy if he will in some way use his influence, which ends in his giving the agent a little note indorsing his book,

although all the clergyman knows of the book is from what the agent has said of it. If the book is of a political character (with the Constitution of the United States and a stack of other stuff which every self-important local politician thinks he may some day need, but which he seldom looks at after it is bought), the agent induces some honorable, who has distinguished himself by holding a chair down in Congress or the Legislature, "to sign for effect." That name inspires hundreds of others to take the book; for surely the honorable would not subscribe to a worthless thing, with all of his experience in politics. The fact is, that a large percentage of the notables who take such books are no more suited to judge of the real merits of them than the less-renowned signers are.

#### HOW "BIG GUNS" ARE REACHED.

The "big guns" are approached with the full price, but if they offer to take the book at a discount, the proposition is entertained without a murmur. They must be obtained, even if the book is practically given away; but that part of the proceeding is regarded as "strictly confidential."

If a canvasser chances to stumble on a man who is not a "leading citizen," but who can be induced to buy a book before the notables are obtained, the agent always turns over several pages of his subscription book, and places the obscure name out of sight. Just notice this the next time an agent calls on you. By that means you can determine what standing your

neighbor has in the opinion of that "remarkable judge of human nature"—a book agent.

Newspapers are usually paid for a few short notices, but the country canvass is made without the indorsement of the local press, which is usually sneered at by the veterans in the field. The best of advertising is a "helper," as the term goes. That is, the agent induces some man to go about and introduce him. This is done by a system of compliments and adroit flattery, and is easily accomplished. It is astonishing to see the readiness of some staid citizen to take an entire stranger about the place, and present him with as much ceremony as though he were a distinguished man. Still, there are men who can be flattered into or paid for doing that class of business. When the deliverer comes around with the books, and the victims have to hand over the money, that "helper" don't feel like going down town for a day or two.

#### CANVASSERS' TACTICS.

The first thing for a canvasser to do is to arouse curiosity, then to create a desire, and then to secure the order before the thing is cold. This system is always observed by successful operators. The fact that nothing can be sold unless a demand for it is felt is one fully realized by the agent. Since a genuine demand for his wares cannot exist, it is necessary to produce an artificial one. The vanity is tickled and the mind is filled with a pleasant sense of egotism, while a really good canvasser is at work. The tough-

est customers are handled easily when the way is paved by flattery. An agent tells the would-be purchaser of the great value of the book in question, and then he expatiates upon the necessity of just such a man as himself having just such a book as that offered. The object is to gain control over the victim.

It is unnecessary for us to follow the method of canvassing. There is not a man in the country of any intelligence or standing who has not been solicited to buy books, and who is not familiar with the details of the proceedings of an agent.

#### THE DAMAGE DONE TO COMMUNITIES.

The evil done to society by book agents is of a negative character. While the wares sold are good enough in their way, the purchaser has received no equivalent for his money, and in that manner becomes a sufferer. Imagine, if you please, a farmer paying out from \$3 to \$15 for a book which he can find no time to read, because the few moments which he can devote to reading are, or should be, given to his newspapers and agricultural periodicals—publications which he must keep up with, or lose the current of public events and modern improvements. What good will such a man derive from a well-bound copy of the national Constitution and the general laws? Or, what service will be rendered him by a work on Stanley's tour through Africa? The former much-talked-about instrument is too dry reading for him to tax his weary brain over, and the latter subject was con-



densed into comprehensive form in his weekly editions of the metropolitan newspapers. The press has taken the place of many books among the generality of men, and has left the domain of literature a limited one. But a small percentage of humanity have time to read books, and that class is one which makes literature a profession. The masses would be greatly improved and benefited if they would purchase books that would improve them, such as encyclopedias, dictionaries and books on practical and useful subjects; but they do not, and probably will not. They gradually acquire a taste for literature by becoming habitual newspaper-readers. But they would appreciate the knowledge more if they did not have to pay three times what their library is worth to procure it.

#### FEMALE BOOK CANVASSERS.

One phase of book-selling we have not touched upon thus far, and that is the female agent dodge. Men are susceptible to the influences of the fair sex, and frequently fall victims to a pretty smile, when they would have had strength to resist the rougher ways of a man. Let a pretty girl approach a man, turn her eyes beseechingly up to his, and tell him of her hard struggle with the world, and his heart beats as though he was under mesmeric control. We know of several instances where young married couples have canvassed a town together; the lady taking the sterner sex, at their places of business, and the young man reaching out after the women at home. That scheme

worked well for a time, and it often transpired that the same family subscribed for two books. Of course, when *pater familias* learned of what his wife had done, he softly whistled to himself, and kept his own counsel about the lovely agent who had bewitched him into buying at the office; and when the deliverer came round he slyly put his own book out of the way. That sort of business worked but a short time, for women are not good subjects to canvass. They seldom have money enough to warrant the indulgence of their sympathetic tastes in such ways. Men who canvass them are obliged to tell sorry stories of the hardships of life, and the struggle they are making to acquire education, etc.

But the female agent alone is a success. The masculine victim will be wheedled into buying anything, from an almanac to a family Bible in fifty-two parts, if the girl be pretty and have a winning smile. Staid old grangers are no more exempt from the blandishments of such workers, than are the kid-gloved gentry in stores and offices. The weakness is inherent, and it is one played upon for full value. The character of the book does not for a moment enter into the question. The lady talks, the man listens and looks and his name goes down upon the list without any hesitation.

Were you ever caught by such a trap? If so, remember one thing the next time a pretty book agent approaches you: When your name was firmly secured, that pleasing little woman silently set you

down in her mind as a silly gudgeon, and went about her way laughing in her sleeve.

#### WHERE THE BOOK AGENT HAS BEEN A BENEFIT.

There is another side to this book subject. The men following the subscription-book business say: "Were it not for book agents, thousands of men who have good libraries would never have had a book in their house. They have bought the books, have read and re-read them, and thereby created a desire to become informed in these matters. There are 10,000 book canvassers, who sell, on an average, 300 books per year, or \$3,000,000 worth of books are sold through agents, where, if the books were to be sold through the trade, and those only buy who actually are interested in the subject, there would not be one-tenth the number of these books sold. The books we put on the market are the very best published. Book agents become the best of judges in regard to a book, and will only handle those having such merit and interest that they can overcome the necessarily large price they have to ask."

#### WHERE HE HAS NOT BEEN A BENEFIT.

Publishers throw their books on the market through the system of agents, because they get so much larger sale in a short time, and for cash. The book that would sell in a bookstore for \$3 is sold by the agent for \$5. A publisher of a book can afford to sell it to a wholesale dealer for \$1.50. The wholesale dealer

sells it to retail dealers for \$2.00 ; he, in turn, asks \$3.00 for it. In dealing through the agency plan, the publisher sells the publication generally direct to the firms who "deal in agents." It is expensive for general agents, to go around and "post" the agents, to pick up new ones, to enthuse them, etc. Then, too, there are so many rascally agents who resort to various devices to swindle the house that employs them, that there must be a margin for these expenses and to cover all emergencies. So the publisher puts the book to the firm at \$1.50. They put the price \$4.75 (never an even figure, but at odd figures, to show close calculation and carry the idea that it is just what they can afford to sell them at), and give the agent 50 per cent ; so the dealer gets \$2.37½. Now, the point we wish to make is this : If that book was put on the trade for, say, \$2.50 or \$3, and people had not got out of the way of going to stores to subscribe because agents are hounding them every day to buy books, and they keep overstocked, they would buy just as many. Another point is, that the agents so thoroughly dissect the book when they canvass a man, that when he comes to read it, he finds nothing but what he heard from the agent ; and, in most cases, appreciates as he reads along, that the book is gotten up with the sole aim of having lots of points as headings, but is not interesting in detail, and he becomes so disgusted that he throws it one side without finishing.

Illustrations most always play an important part in making the book salable ; and every one that goes in



the book is always in the prospectus copy used by the agent to sell by.

#### BOOKS SOLD BY AGENTS NOT THE BEST.

It is true that some of the best books published are allowed to be sold only through agents. But you can't name one of those books, but that we can take you to second-hand book stores and furnish you copies, new, or as good as new, at one-third rates. We can show you, for instance, the most standard of works—Appleton's Encyclopedia, sold by subscription at \$6 per copy—sold in the second-hand book stores at half price; and other books, not standard, at your own price. Why? Because the agents forced them on men who were not able to buy them, and the first time their families needed necessities of life, the book had to go to the pawn-shop.

#### THE WAY TO REMEDY THE EVIL.

If people would take this matter in hand, and not patronize this extortionate way of doing business, the wandering book agent would have to set his muscle at work and let his tongue rest. Books would be sold through the legitimate trade at reasonable rates. People would buy as many books, and only what they actually require, and would read them; and this at a cost of half the money they would expend for subscription books.

#### THE POOREST BOOKS ARE SOLD BY SUBSCRIPTION.

We contend that the poorest books published are sold by subscription. Hundreds of books are thrown

to these agents that have no merit, and all in the world that sells them is a slick male or female canvasser; a pretty binding, some pictures and a few startling "points." There are men in the country who do nothing but write books for the sole purpose of being just the thing to sell. A publisher takes a notion to get out a new book. He gets a few good ideas he thinks canvassers could sound with striking effect. He next lies awake nights to think of a captivating name for it. For a title is about the most important matter to consider. He sets the "machine" to work with the headings given him, to fill up with monotonous words, and make a book.

#### SELLING IN NUMBERS.

Selling by numbers had an immense run, but as most every one has been so badly taken in, in some way, by this method, it is hard to work it nowadays. Who has not heard the irrepressible book agent sing out at every opportunity, "Only 50 cents a number." Why, you would have the finest volume in the English language in a year's time, and never know that it had cost you a cent. Take, for instance, a Bible gotten up in this way, and it costs you from three to four times what it would if bought of a book dealer who did not have to give one-half his receipts to the agent. It is worth as much to collect 50 cents as it is \$5. It takes no longer to find a man or to make change, so this man, who collects your 50 cents, gets 20 to 25 cents for it. Where the subscriber receives

disappointment is, when he sends the volume to get it bound. The agent represents that it costs from \$6.50, for ordinary binding, to \$11 for the very finest. But when your book is returned to you, you will have paid at least \$20 for a suitable binding for such a large Bible. The chances are that some of the numbers will have been soiled or lost, and of course will have to be replaced. Who has ever bought a family Bible in this way that costs him less than \$45? And how many have paid \$60?

Is it not enough to disgust a man with books when he sees in his house a book that has cost him \$20 or \$50, when he has never felt able to pay a dollar for a dictionary, and probably does not know the meaning of any but the commonest and simplest words in his book.

The reason this plan is adopted is to cut the big price up into small amounts, and then not allow a man to fully understand what the entire cost will be. Few men stop to consider that three 10-cent cigars per day amount to \$110 a year, and on this principle hundreds of thousands of families have purchased numbers in this way, and have stored them away either in disgust, when they found what it would cost to get them bound, or are waiting until they can accumulate money enough for that purpose, or have sent them to the bindery and have not been able to pay for the binding. These books are of different shapes. Some vary in thickness; so for a bindery to arrange all its machinery and procure em-

bossing plates to turn out a few volumes would be too expensive. Thus the publishers have matters their own way, and nearly always get the work at their own rates. One-half do not pay the bill, and the consequence is, that in time, the books are sold to other parties at a good profit over the bindery bill.

#### THE WAY AGENTS ARE PROCURED.

These firms have general agents who travel from place to place, visiting their agents, "posting them up," and inspiring them to greater deeds; also to find new ones, get them to buy an outfit, and go to work. They pick for men and women who are out of employment, and have the necessary qualities, such as good appearance, "brass" and gift of gab. They hunt out that class as the best who have been unfortunate either by bad judgment or accident, and have the sympathy of the community. They can use their misfortunes to secure business. They can ask a person to subscribe from them for a book, when they could not ask for help in the shape of alms. People will patronize them where they get something in return who would not give as a matter of charity. There is a peculiar gift in a successful canvasser. Few have all the necessary qualities combined. When he or she has, it's a "gold mine" to them. Its \$10 to \$50 per day. Many persons soon get tired of going all day long, some from day to day, from preacher to barber, lawyer to cobbler, farmer to laborer, getting "No, no;" "Can't afford it;" "You come too thick;



you agents take all I make," "Go to work;" "You're worse than a pestilence," "The tramp law should apply to you fellows;" "Where is my shot-gun;" "Get out of this house;" "Set the dogs on him;" "Climb," etc., and leave the business. But a majority stick, and spend their lives as book-peddlers. After a while they lose all their finer feelings, and care for nothing but success, making money and spending it. If they get the cold shoulder all day, they make it up in the evening by spending their money in pleasures.

SOME GOOD PEOPLE ARE BOOK AGENTS.

Many good citizens follow the business, behave themselves, save their money and support families. They do this because they are adapted to the business, and can make more money than at anything else. Many young men read the advertisements for agents, and go into it because it takes but small capital, and teaches them the ways of the world, and wears off their bashfulness or greenness.

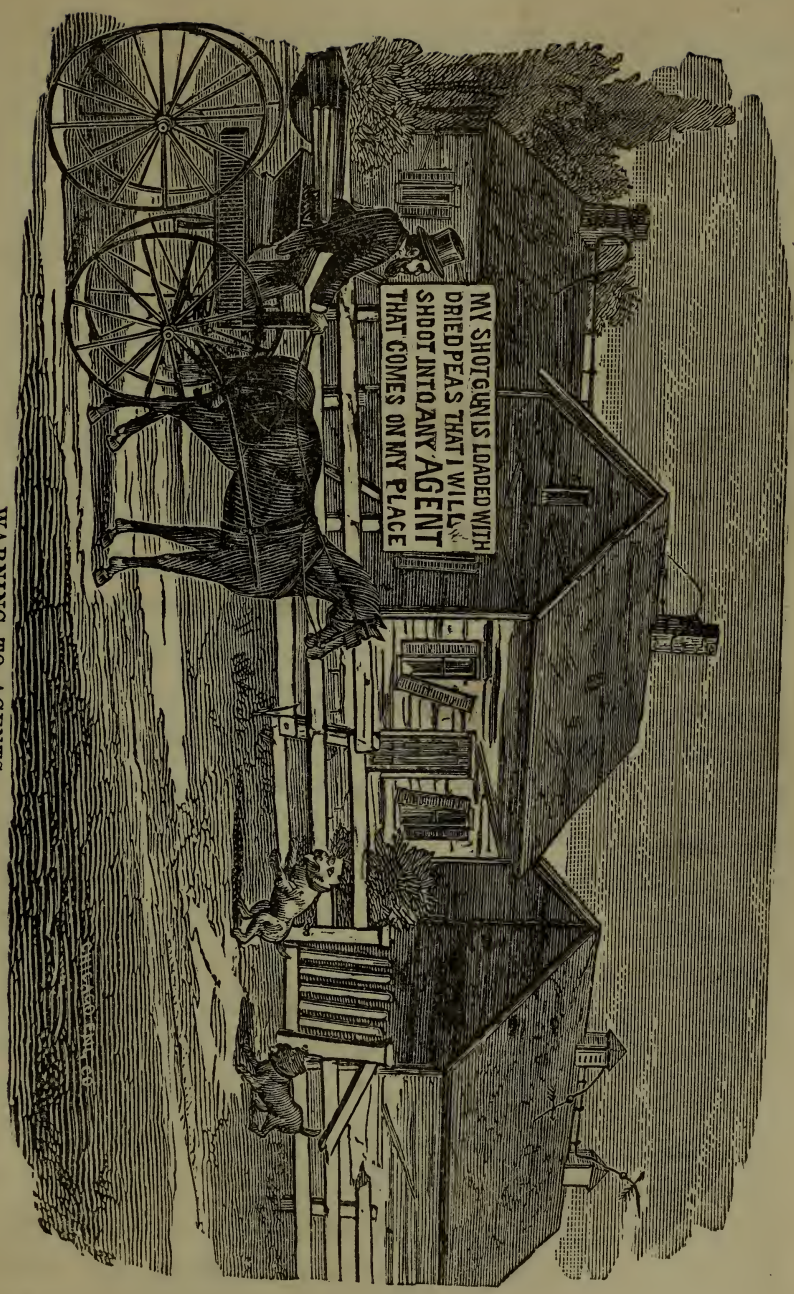
The firms employing agents always manage to sell them an outfit, and they figure that any man who will buy an outfit will sell a few. They will begin on father, then uncles, aunts, cousins and neighbors, many of whom will patronize the boy who is just branching out. They would not for the world discourage him. In fact, between relationship and neighborly feeling, they are compelled to adorn that subscription-book with their "John Hancocks." The career of thousands of young men who came West to grow up with

the country, has been that they taught school in winter and went to canvassing for books in the spring; taught school and studied Blackstone next winter; sold books, lightning-rods, atlases or patent rights the next spring and summer; taught another term of school, went into a law office the next; stumped around among country schoolhouses next political campaign, and finally drifted into the Legislature, Congress, etc.

Had it not been for canvassing, they might have taken to the plow and been lost in oblivion.

#### HOW TO ANSWER BOOK AGENTS.

“Your book is published; why not bring it with you? I could then judge of it. You now want me to sign a contract. Undoubtedly, that contract is a jug-handle—all on one side. I am not familiar with the book trade, and do not know just what to expect when you say royal octavo, half leather, supersized calendered paper, brevier type, leaded, mezzotint chromos and steel plates. I do not have that sample you have just shown me, consequently I am compelled to take just what you bring. You do not give me time to read parts of it and judge for myself. I am entirely at your mercy, or the men who collect for you, as I have never known the pleasant fellow who canvasses to do his own collecting; but the collector never smiles; don't know anything about what you have promised me this book should be; is in an awful hurry; talks about suing me, that I feel like shooting every book-



WARNING TO AGENTS,

CHICAGO, ILL. '89



peddler who enters my premises. Now, stranger, I go on the recollection that I have never subscribed for a book and had it come up to my expectations from what the agent set it forth to be. My neighbors are of the same mind I am. One of them has been so deceived and swindled by plausible talkers that have come to him with schemes, that he has a sign on his fence that any agent that comes on his place will get a full load of dried pease, with which his shot-gun is loaded to the muzzle; and the shorter the range he gets the better, he will be satisfied. He is a splendid man, too; one of the most exemplary men I ever knew; but these fellows have come around to him and talked him into all these things until he had to mortgage his farm and go without improvements and necessities to pay the notes they got him to sign. He told me the other day that he had counted up what he had paid agents since he has lived here; and says if he had never seen one of them he would not have owed a cent in the world and would have as good buildings and be fixed as well as any man in the community. Do you think that sign down there stopped them? No, sir! Those fellows hear of that sign twenty miles away, and come all the way here to see it, and then go to him and try to sell him whatever they have. He says they are on him before he knows what they come for. He can't carry a shot-gun on his back while he works in his fields or is sitting in his house. They always come up smiling, and talk to him in a pleasant, consoling way, and finally wind up



by wanting him to buy something once, where he will be sure to get his money's worth. He is almost too poor now to buy anything; but I saw a fellow the other day who had his name for a county history. You see, everybody knows about that sign, and if one of the fellows can get his name now, it's a big card, and shows him to be smart. Some of them promise to give him a book if he will put his name down; but they use his name and don't bring him the book, so he has quit that. The big point you keep making is, that you won't deliver it for almost two months. What is the need of your going to the expense of coming back here. I should think you would bring your books along; and if the great inducement for me to subscribe is because I don't have to pay for it for some time, you could take my note for that length of time. That would save you at least half a dollar, and I would be just as well off. I could pay a note at that time as well as I could pay a subscription; and I could not be deceived in the book. By subscribing, I will be deceived, undoubtedly."



## COUNTY HISTORIES.

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County histories may be classed with those articles which are exceedingly valuable to some and wholly useless to others. It is well enough to preserve historic facts and incidents in permanent form; but when it comes to making a business of the matter and calling upon the public to contribute largely to the enterprise, the good that is in it is more than counterbalanced by the evil.

The county history plan was devised as a complete opposite of the atlas scheme; so as to meet the possible arguments against that work with persuasive assents and capture the same men by a simple change of tactics. For example: The atlases are objected to because of their immense size; the histories are gotten up on a smaller and more convenient scale. The former cost too much money; the latter are offered at half the price. The atlases were all maps; the history has but one small map. The atlases were filled with views of farms and towns that looked no more like the originals than Chinese letters look like English print; the histories have no views of buildings or farms. In fact, everything is reversed, and several new features are added.

These books are worked off in this way: An agent of the publishers visits the leading towns of the county they propose to write up, and ascertains if any history has ever been issued. In most cases, he finds the field clear, and at once secures the newspapers by making liberal contracts for advertising. Several columns of space are contracted for at the editor's own figures. This liberality is shown for the purpose of securing good-will and hearty co-operation on the editor's part. It is agreed that the agent shall furnish "copy," and that the newspaper will publish whatever is sent, as though it was original. The object is to avoid the appearance of a paid-for advertisement. The agent then gets out a quantity of editorial and floods the country press with it. While the matter is being read by the people, another agent of the house puts in an appearance and arranges for hotel and livery accommodations, and sets the force of canvassers at work. Then comes the "historian," who is usually some impecunious literary hack out of a regular job, but who has a faculty for passing for a gentleman. The invasion now begins in good earnest. A large volume is promised, and the history of the county, from the nebulous stage of matter to the birth of the last baby, is confidently predicted by the newspapers, at so much a line, in notices written by the historian, but which appear as editorials.

The plan of operations is based on certain demonstrable facts, chief among which are the ones that the "old settlers" of the West like to have their

exploits spoken of; that the pioneers' support can always be secured; and that each county thinks its own history is worth preserving, no matter whether anything of importance has ever occurred within its borders or not. Added to these, is the equally potent truth that no local house dares to incur the expense of getting up an exclusively historical work; but the egotism of communities is strong enough to desire to see the venture undertaken.

Now, all these points are considered by the publishers, and are used to their fullest degree. It was some time before the right plan was hit upon; but it was finally discovered that a combination book, under the name of history, but having other features, was the thing. Like the wicked circus when advertised as such alone, the history would be unpatronized in plain form; but let the show be supplemented with a few sickly animals and called a menagerie, and people would rush in by the score. So the history was supplemented with the all-powerful personal biography plan, and those who were too modest to take an exclusive biographical work, and were too indifferent to buy a history, winked at the thin disguise and swallowed them both. Here is again illustrated the point already made, that men are vulnerable on the score of seeing their names in print.

The county history business, as worked by the firm of H. F. Kett & Co., and, later, by the Western Historical Company, of Chicago, was about as follows:

The house had some "lightning men" in its employ. We need not particularize on this point, since each



one of the thousands of men who bought histories will recognize this sketch, and see before them in *propria persona* the one who secured his name.

A genial, smiling but business-like man enters the store or office of the intended subscriber. He draws forth a little paper-covered book and says, with an air of great respect: "How do you do, Mr. Jones? I suppose you have heard that the Great North American Publishing and Historical Company are thinking of publishing a history of your county. They have sent me here to gather a few historical facts, and if you will be so kind as to give me a very few moments of your time, I will thank you."

"Certainly."

"Where were you born? (Takes down the answer of this and each subsequent question as though the fate of nations hung on the reply.) What were your parents' names? When did you move to this section? When were you married? To whom; and your wife's name? How many children have you? What are their names and ages? What business enterprises have you engaged in? (By this time the surprised Mr. Jones asks the urbane gentleman what he is driving at, and is told that he is merely gathering information for the county history now in process of compilation. Mr. Jones asks certain questions, and is firmly but politely told that those inquiries can better be answered when the biography is finished. The agent then proceeds): "Have you ever held public office? Were you in the army? What important events have occurred in your life?"



A GRANGER GIVING HIS BIOGRAPHY FOR COUNTY HISTORY.

*Granger.*—"What other great things have I done? Well, when I come to Illinois I only had three shillings left. My fellow-citizens, without my asking, have give me the honor to be Road-Master four years, and a School Officer two years."



By this time the agent gently returns his biographical note-book to his pocket, and explains what an extensive and valuable publication this will be; how important it is to gather the facts while the early settlers are living and occurrences are fresh in their minds, and the biographical incidents make the history so much more valuable, etc. The plan to those who request us, is to bring them one of our books when published; and the price is only \$7.50. We publish these biographies just as I have them. Of course, Mr. Jones, you want a copy of the work when it is published? And Mr. Jones is so taken off his legs by the prospect of having his biography in a book, that he is almost persuaded. If he shows the least inclination to sign, the agent pushes the little book and a pencil before him and utters those fatal words, "Sign right there, Mr. Jones." Usually, that fixes the thing; but if the man attempts to argue, the agent hands him a card, with a horrible map of his State printed on one side and a list of promises on the other; and with that prospectus he meets every conceivable objection that can be raised against subscribing. There is little prospect of the man's escaping from a "lightning" canvasser for that work. The name is written before a serious thought is allowed to be given the matter.

Portraits are introduced with these histories, but to obviate the difficulties of an exhausted field they are placed before a certain few leading men in the county, it being a matter of absolute necessity that their faces

should appear in the work. The object of the portraits is to attract attention at time of delivery from the contents of the book. Subscribers generally glance at the portraits, and form their opinion of the book from them. No money consideration is asked for the portraits, but the men are required to subscribe to a certain number of books at the retail price, which makes the profit fully as large to the publishers.

Here again the big fellows are caught. The canvassers make them believe that they can sell the books at subscription price, or a very little below. But they find out on delivery that they were sold so numerously that they cannot be given away, and the "big gun" has a little library of one kind of books.

As this history scheme has, within the past few years, swept the country, and there are to-day not less than thirty firms in active operation, several of which have in the field large forces of men, and all are driving an immense business, we think it best to publish the prospectus under which they work together with the rules and regulations which govern one of the largest of them, H. F. Kett & Co. The firm consisted of H. F. Kett and A. T. Andreas. They were the originators of the scheme, and have left their tracks in a large portion of Illinois and Iowa. They tried to do a satisfactory business, as their rules will show.

Mr. Kett became disgusted with the dissatisfaction that existed in every county on account of the rascality and carelessness of some of the agents, and Mr. Andreas thought he would "take a rest," and so they



sold out to the Western Historical Company. Below are the rules above referred to. We have cut out many which would not be interesting to the reader :

REVISED RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE PUBLICATION OF COUNTY HISTORIES.

SUGGESTIONS TO CANVASSERS.

“To be a successful solicitor, a man must observe certain rules of action that experience has taught to be essential. We wish to say, in the beginning of these articles, that we are well aware that no man can lay down rules for all men, or for all cases ; nor can one man put words in others’ mouths, to be used mechanically to advantage ; but general ideas and strong points, gained by men who have studied the subject, and have their own and others’ experience to go by, can be suggested and explained, and then the canvasser can bring them out in his own natural way ; and if that natural way is objectionable or ineffectual, he must so suit his words and actions that they will have the desired effect. Actors on the stage are almost invariably the reverse from what their characters appear to the audience. It is proverbial that comic actors are very dry and sedate when not on duty, but their business calls them to personate certain characters, which they do. So with a man who follows this business ; he should study what constitutes a successful canvasser, how he should act, talk, gesture, and then personate that man every time he solicits another. We do not wish to be understood to say that all men are or can make themselves canvassers, no more than we would say that all men can become poets ; but do say that any man having the natural elements of a canvasser in him, by strictly observing certain rules, can make himself a canvasser of some grade.

Canvassing is a business or profession, and should be studied and followed as such. To those who succeed in mastering it, it proves very remunerative. We have hurriedly gathered a few thoughts and suggestions which we herewith give, and hope, by a careful analysis and application of them, that they will prove beneficial to those in our employ.

Familiarize yourself thoroughly with the work you are to solicit for. Know it from beginning to end.

Know your man before you approach him. Ascertain his peculiar traits, know the position he occupies in his community, and what his aspirations are. He may have a great desire for the education and information of his children; he may be controlled by his wife; he may be, as most men are, an aspirant for political honors, and consequently wants to be conspicuous in all home matters; or he may be a man who desires to have his wealth published. Most men have done something unusual; have seen something, have been somewhere, have held some offices, have some family affairs of interest, or in some way have personal matters that they would like to see placed in type, and be handed down through future generations.

Always bring up your business first thing. Never begin talking about anything else; if you do, it is impossible then to get back on your beaten track, and you have already created the impression that you have nothing that sells on its merits, but some smooth talk is going to do part of the work.

Approach a man pleasantly; use all your magnetism, be active, and create just as favorable an impression upon him as you can. His first impressions of you and your work are just one-half the battle; consequently, the first words should be uttered pleasantly and with telling effect, and in them should be the most valuable points of your work.

Courteously ask a man for a few moments of his time, and make him let you do all the talking until you are through. If he commences to argue, do not contradict him. Avoid argument. There are ways to prevent getting into a controversy.

Never know more or appear smarter than the man you are talking to.

All men are susceptible to flattery, and, when judiciously applied, it is undoubtedly the most effective way a canvasser can gain the good-will and acquiescence of his customer.

Never bore a man with long-winded explanations or harangues, but interest him by talking to the point, and when you see you are not claiming his attention, change around, ask questions, or do something to control his thoughts; because, when he is looking carelessly or blankly or acting nervously, he is thinking up excuses to hurl at you when you are through with your story.

A canvasser should be a judge of human nature, and suit his explanations and language to the circumstances and peculiarities of his customers.

Your constant aim should be to create a desire for your work.

Do not be blunt or harsh, and when you mention the price, do it in a smooth, easy way, and, on doing so, do not stop there and have the cost ringing in his ears and throw his whole thoughts off the value and importance of your work on to the expense, but push ahead your conversation, and the price will not be so noticeable.

Talk plainly and candidly, warmly and feelingly, actively and pointedly, and so suit your words and explanations to your man that he may understand clearly what you are endeavoring to do and say.

A canvasser's whole thoughts should be concentrated on his subject and customer, and not be afraid,



confused or embarrassed, or act awkwardly, or mix up his explanations; but show the person he is canvassing that he is sincere, and feels and means what he says, and has confidence in his work.

When a man seemingly acquiesces (as you can tell by his actions), take it for granted he is going to subscribe. Often men would subscribe if you do not give them a chance to refuse. Ofttimes, if you ask a man bluntly, he would say no from force of habit.

Do not canvass women, if you possibly can see the men, unless they are known to have equal say-so with the husband. Bear in mind that half the women who subscribe are not allowed by their husbands to pay for it.

Never talk your business, under any circumstances, to outsiders, or in hotels or public places. Never tell them how much you are making. Keep your business to yourself.

Procrastination, putting off work until to-morrow, or waiting for pleasant weather, is sure to prove disastrous. Bad weather is sure to find men at home.

Never leave a man to see him again, if you can possibly avoid it. Use the argument that this is a small matter to bother him again about; that you are just getting ready to go out in the county to work, and you need the assistance his name will be to you, and appeal to him to not ask you to bother him again, etc., etc.

Do not expect a man to always patronize you, but do not run when he says "Not to day;" but show intense astonishment, and then throw in the heavy arguments—of the immensity of this work, the expense of going to every house, and of publishing such a work for the few hundred we can sell in this county, and the pride with which he will look on this volume if it is accurate and what we promise, etc. Picture



out to him how intensely interested he would be to-day if you then had in your hands a work of the same kind of his native county, or even of this county; how he would glance over the names of familiar ones to see if their names were down in good shape, or only on one line, and not large letters; and ask him which he would read first—the one-line ones, or the others. Show him the pleasure of reading a book where he can be interested by familiarizing himself with people of his own county, whom he casually meets, and how in a short time he becomes, by this directory, familiar with the people of the county; by the history of Illinois, know the history of his State; by the laws, know the essence of the laws affecting every-day transactions; and with the extensive history, statistics and valuable matter pertaining to his own county, he places himself, as far as information is concerned, on an equal footing with the early pioneer, who has made the settlement, progress and development of the county his life study. Does he think this a commendable and valuable undertaking? Then how is it going to succeed without the patronage of such men, etc. To be a success in this world, a man must devote his whole thoughts and time to his calling; should never follow anything he is ashamed of, but in whatever vocation in life he is thrown, if he wants to be successful, must give it his whole time and thought, and strive constantly to get new points and new ideas, and to excel or become equal to others following the same business.

When a man goes into a place he should inquire for the best men, and so manage as to get their help, first by subscribing, and then by introducing him and speaking a good word for his work, etc.

A prudent canvasser will attend meetings, lodges, etc., and spend his leisure time in places where peo-

ple will consider he is a man of brains and character. The man who spends time and money in saloons, billiard-halls and disreputable places has a poisoned brain, and cannot possibly do justice to his business. He always goes to work reluctantly, works mechanically, has a dissipated, kill-dog look, carries his character in his countenance, and loses the patronage of the best class of the community. He invariably wants to overdraw his account, because weather has been bad, has sprained his ankle, or something of the kind. He is constantly substituting excuses for work. His bills remain unpaid (where he can), and he leaves behind generally a bad reputation, and people gauge the business he represents by the man who represents it.

On leaving a place, if a man has behaved himself, and given the people a good, square, lively and thorough canvass, they will say he's "lightning;" if he has loafed around, and showed incompetency, and merely acted the part of a "teaser," they will say he's a "seed."

#### REPLIES TO OBJECTIONS.

We might throw out a few ideas in regard to objections canvassers have to encounter in this work. "*Books come around every day*," etc. Those books are already published, and should be brought around to sell instead of trying to get your subscription by showing you the most attractive pages. What I am here for now is to get information that will have yet to be printed, and there are twenty men in this county doing the same thing. We are publishing a volume in which we treat entirely about your own homes and your families, your religious and political neighborhood matters, and getting you something every line of which is of the deepest interest and which you can

no more read through and lay aside than you can your dictionary. To do this, we must ask the help of those whose names and acts we go to the expense of printing and passing down to their children in a beautifully bound volume. You will, Mr. Jones, spend a little of your income every year in purchasing reading matter, and all I ask you is to look unprejudicedly around and select those works that will prove to be the most interesting, instructive and valuable.

*“Do not know what we will get.”* You cannot be swindled in this matter. We first submit our samples and plans to a large number of your most prominent men, and show them what they say of us, where we have been and finished our delivery, show them that we are an honorable and responsible firm, and that there is no fear of our not doing as we say we will, and then they indorse us by signing a document covering these facts, which we get published in all the papers of the county, and in circulars which we send to every responsible man in the county, if we can get his address. If we should not do as we agree, the whole county would crush us before we would get one-tenth part of our books delivered. We must do everything we say we will, and more, too.

*“Can get along without it.”* Yes, of course, we can get along without half the luxuries we have; but would we be as happy as if we had one of these works, and are put in there in as good shape as patrons are. Men of education or knowledge have to get all these things to keep up with the progress of the times. Things to get along without should be those that bring us no comfort, no pleasure or no benefits. Without the help of such men as you, you will clearly see we cannot succeed, and you will acknowledge you almost consider it a calamity for us to have to throw



this up for want of patronage. Now, I ask, what would be your feelings if you should hear next week that we had gone into the next county, because this people did not appreciate, etc.

But I have not much fear of that, because in nearly every part of the county men are sending favorable reports; but we have to get nearly everybody in order to make it pay to publish all this just for the list we get in this one county.

“*What good will it do me?*” We might say what good would it be to us to know what county we live in, how many townships there are in it, and what towns, or what is the use taking newspapers, because we cannot point out the time and circumstances such things have been profitable to us; but the knowledge of these things combined makes us respected among men, and without which we would hardly be noticed. In this, it seems to me, that men and their families, during rainy weather or leisure time, would read, or, as occasion would require, would pick it up to learn about something, and in the course of time would become perfectly familiar with everybody in their county, know them or know of them, and people would know of you, and when you meet in town, or any place, you have become acquainted through this book; and so about laws, history of State or county, etc., etc.

“*Hard Times.*” Yes, times are hard, but we must not cease informing ourselves, especially when it costs so little; the price of this, in our transactions of a year, is so small, that it is but a drop. If one of your calves should die to-day, you would not notice it, or if beef drop in price a little; neither would you notice the cost of this volume, especially when you find in it constant reading matter for months.



*"Have a house full of books not read."* Few business men ever sit down and read books through; they want matters treating of every-day transactions or practical things, and this is gotten up for that purpose, to give a man practical, every-day ideas and information where he can see it does him good mentally, socially or financially.

*"Have been swindled so many times."* It would do for men who are ignorant, or have no brains or judgment, to say that they cannot trust themselves, and have to "swear off doing business;" but in your case you know what you are doing, and know when you make a bargain with a man you can compel him to perform his part; and when we are swindled once, we should repair damages by using better judgment next time.

*"Have sworn off subscribing."* Never subscribe for a thing that is already in existence, like books, etc., but, in this case, we make this work especially for this county, and we publish just the number ordered, and all the information we get about you is published after you tell us what to put in, and what we put in depends on whether you help us in getting this up or not. We have so arranged this work to give great advantages over those who do not patronize us, by inserting your name in large letters, and giving you three times the amount of matter.

#### HISTORY.

As to our work in particular, the canvasser must study our suggestions, familiarize himself with his sample copy, and "cut loose for himself." Our work is entirely of a local nature, and should be separated from all stereotyped works. We will say that the following items have proved essential to nearly all those who have tried all ways: Go to a man,

and, after merely saying who you are, ask him the questions usually asked subscribers, and write them down carefully, spelling every proper name, and be careful as to dates, and thereby get him interested, and his curiosity thoroughly aroused. Then say that he probably has heard of this enterprise, and you will show him in a few minutes what the plan is, etc. Frontispiece, Index, Map of County, History of the State in a very condensed form, History of Northwest Territory, War Record of County, Laws of the State, which apply to your every-day transactions (and we will here say that more time can be spared on laws, and their headings mentioned, and, for instance, when you come to Wills, say that a man should know where his property will go if he dies without a will; if he would like to have his property go differently, or if he wishes to make some bequests to others, this tells him how to do it without consulting a lawyer or without expense). Forms of all kinds, which will save employing lawyers, etc. And then the names of all people in the county who vote, and to those who say they will take one of our works, if we receive encouragement enough to publish it, we put it down just as you have given it to me, and put your name in large letters, and if you do not say you would like one when they come out, this is sent to the office in Chicago, and they take just enough of it to make a line—for instance—and show him how it will appear when published, and then go on and say that Mr. ———, takes one (read some of his neighbors), and that he will have you bring him one, etc., taking it for granted he will, etc.

Show a man by circular what prominent men in other counties say about our work, three months after it has been delivered; ask them if ever anything came into this county where they could do that.

Try and show a man where, in his particular case, he would be benefited, or it would be profitable to him.

It is best not to use the word "subscribe," but say, "take it when published," "want one," or something of that kind.

*Canvass strictly by the Prospectus*, as everything we are sure of publishing is mentioned in that.

#### RULES AND REGULATIONS.

Certain territory—usually a township—will be assigned to each canvasser, and he must not go outside of that, and, when on the line roads, must only work on his side of the road. But if by accident a man is crowded on you, canvass him, and report the same to this office, so that we can prevent another canvasser from going to the trouble of visiting him. It is his duty to get the name of every man in his territory who votes or pays taxes (and is a resident), and either get them as subscribers or non-subscribers.

*Subscriber*—Name, business, residence or section, post-office address, where born, and date of birth, when came to this State or county, politics, religion, acres of land owned, value, offices held, army record, other important acts, name of wife, her birthplace, date of marriage, number of children, etc., etc.

*Non-Subscriber*—Name, business, residence or section, post-office address.

To subscribers we do not say that all these questions should be asked, by any means, but enough to make a respectable showing of about twelve lines, unless they wish to pay extra.

Be very careful when you take matter for subscriber's biography that he don't give you dates that conflict with each other; for instance, having first



child before he is married, and coming to State before he was born, etc.

We impress upon agents the importance of spelling names correctly, and being careful to get everything accurate and plain, in both subscriber and non-subscriber, and to send it in here in such a shape that we will understand it. Names should be written in printed letters; our printers set type from the copy you send us. We will be responsible for our own mistakes, and expect canvassers to be for theirs.

All books given away, except to newspaper men, will be charged to the agent so giving them away, but fifty cents will be allowed him, on account of his saving the delivery, and if he sold the same he can have his commission for selling.

If we find a canvasser leaving bills behind unpaid, of any description, we will thereafter adopt some plan of paying his bills for him, before we pay him, because when he gets trusted it is on our credit and not his.

Every man frequenting saloons and billiard-halls renders himself unfit for work, disgraces the business and thereby loses the patronage of the best class of people, and it is not our intention to keep such a man; but if for any reason we do keep him, we will give him a territory where there are no such places.

Agents must not try to do their country canvassing by meeting men in town. Farmers will not sign as readily in town as at home.

Agents will confer a favor by not asking us for particular territory. We assign territory, taking into consideration, ability, adaptability and merit.

Agents are requested to write us at the end of every week at least what they have done, what is yet to do, prospects, etc.

In our work we have to go to so much expense, that we cannot keep men who do not prove to be



successful, and we always reserve the right, in employing a man, to dispense with his services at any time.

Idleness, inattention to business from any cause, are disastrous, and we will adopt some means to finish any man's territory who is so diseased, and make his reserve commissions pay the extra expense. We also reserve the right to recanvass, at his expense, where he has run over the ground, and not done his duty.

Agents are not allowed, under any circumstances, to canvass for anything else, while in our employ. If such is done, we will consider the damage done sufficient to refuse to pay such agent reserve commissions sufficient to cover such damages.

Report to us all men of prominence who would be apt to desire a portrait, and are of the class that will be creditable to the work.

Anything a deliverer should know, should be plainly memorandumed in the subscription-book.

If a man commences a township and does not finish it, we will pay but the first cash payment of one dollar, because we have to pay extra for finishing it, and lose by the change.

As we pay as fast as work is done, we expect men to pay their hotel and livery bills at least weekly.

Portraits are a separate department, and canvassers will not be allowed, under any circumstances, to negotiate for them. Great discretion has to be used in selecting them, and when a canvasser for the book also talks portrait, he is certain of losing most he talks to, and is sure to lose the best men. A canvasser must not talk about portraits, nor even promise that he will send a man to see him, because we propose to put in a limited number only, and those who are put in must be of the class to give credit to the work. Names of suitable parties for portraits should be sent in with report always.

We do not propose to pay men for getting subscribers when they have traded or are to trade them out, or where they are complimentary or optional. To remedy this evil, if names are reported to us as subscribers, and commissions are paid for them, and we find out on delivery that they come under the above head (have paid or are not to pay) we will charge the book to the agent. Men are to understand that the reserve is to cover loss in delivery and nothing else. To avoid this, report all trading orders and we will always be reasonable.

When there are any circumstances connected with a man's subscription, such as any one else signing it for him, etc., the facts should be noted on subscription-book, or brought to our knowledge, as it saves many times the delivery of the book by knowing these circumstances.

Taking into consideration that in every county we have been in, some one or more of our agents have acted dishonestly, involving ourselves and our agents in great loss, to protect ourselves and those in our employ, we must throw about our business proper safeguards, and not hold out inducements or leave opportunities for men to act rascally for cash commissions.

On all that deliver for \$7.50, we give a commission of \$2.00. On all acceptable biographies sent in to us by Tuesday forenoon of each week, we advance, on the following Friday, \$1.00 on each biography, on account, for the purpose of defraying expenses in procuring these subscriptions.

The account to be made out and placed to canvasser's credit when the delivery of the county is finished. Reports to be sent to us at the end of each week, inclosing the subscribers' biographies the same as heretofore. No money will be sent unless our printed card, certifying to genuineness, etc., is sent also.

The commissions on subscriptions settled for by notes will be credited to canvasser when notes are paid. We must stop this getting worthless names, both on the account of the expense in publishing and the disgrace of having extended biographies of such men, as also publishing books for them and the trouble of sending men to try and deliver to them. Hereafter, on all such men we will charge the canvasser two cents per line where we publish their biographies.

We have investigated very carefully the delivery of Henry County, and find that nearly every worthless man on this list was known to be such by the canvasser, or he could have ascertained the fact by asking any banker or neighbor; and nearly every note taken was promised by the canvasser. We must be able to know just how many books we can print, and get our pay for them in cash. We get non-subscribers, but give the books to canvassers working in the country to let prominent citizens examine and correct, as it is to the interest of all parties to have everything correct.

No cash will be advanced on names signed by canvasser.

In delivery, we do all we can to settle, even to having second men go to them, and also, send them a circular setting out the legal facts in the case. When we have exhausted all endeavors, and cannot effect a settlement, and have to place the matter in attorney's hands, the expense eats up the book and we can not allow commissions.

Sometimes we have to make deductions in settlement on account of errors in biographies, parties' notes not being good, or they insist that canvasser told them the book was to be less money, or for similar causes, we are not to stand the loss unless the errors or causes are our fault.



We contend that it is in the power of the canvasser to make the terms of payment and time of delivery clear, and if he makes errors in getting dates or spelling names, or procures men's subscriptions whose ability to pay is doubtful, it is his fault, not ours. We deliver some men's lists and find no trouble whatever, in any respect, while others are the reverse. We place this matter in the shape that every man pays us \$7.50 for the book, and we give him \$2.00 when we get the money. He to stand his own losses, and we our errors.

By adopting this rule a man who canvasses by intrigue derives no advantage over the man who does his work clearly and squarely.

Immediately on getting a subscriber in another's territory, report to him or to this office; if you do not and he goes to that man, he is entitled to subscriber.

Biographies will be allowed to average 12 lines; all over will be charged to canvasser 2 cents per line. Worthless subscribers, or men procured as subscribers when canvasser could have known, by using common diligence, that he is doubtful pay; or men procured as subscribers under misrepresentation, or where the case is plain that he was not a bona-fide subscriber, we will charge canvasser 2 cents per line for printing said biography, unless canvasser had written us the facts, and we had seen fit to print biography. We want all doubtful cases referred to us. In this way only can we calculate on the number of books to publish. No commissions will be paid on subscribers until complete biographies are sent to this office. Biographies can be sent by mail at 2 cents per four ounces, but neither letters nor remarks of any kind can be inclosed, only matter for publication, with number of order and name of township. The package must not be sealed, but



tied, or left in such a way that post-office officials can examine it.

Canvassers will be supplied with a list of voters in each township, and it is their duty to see that the names are spelled correctly, and to put down their business, name of town they live in, or, if in country, section and post-office address. In cases where voters have moved from county, scratch out name; if still in county, state where, and add all persons not on list in back part of book.

When township is done, do not carelessly fold up book and send us, but look carefully over the list to see that all names are marked as above, intelligibly, as the accuracy of the Directory is a very essential element in the book, and on it depends the popularity of the work and the delivery of your list.

When done in township, send in by express, book, map of county, and original memoranda of biographies, so we can detect errors.

Men must not scatter over several townships, but complete as fast as they go. Very little cash commissions will be paid on second township until first one is sent in. Reports must be sent us for the week, and not parts of a week. All reports received here after Tuesday morning will not be included in our remittances of the following Friday, but go over into next week's reports.

We are annoyed when we begin a delivery, by hotels, livery-stables, etc., bringing in bills; and in their anxiety to some way pay for their subscription, they have often, as many of you are aware, been paid twice; and once they get money in that way it is impossible to correct the error. To avoid this, when done in a county, send receipted bills to date.

When men are at work in towns having newspapers they will be allowed to have short local notices pub-

lished every week at our expense, but marked papers must be sent us.

### FRUITS OF CARELESSNESS.

We have taken a hasty view of the new "County History," and find it, as far as our acquaintance goes, sadly deficient in almost everything which goes to make a true record of events. It is surprising how the publishers could risk their reputation on a work which is manifestly a bundle of misstatements and blunders from beginning to end.

Persons who have lived in the county twenty-five or thirty years have been wholly omitted, while persons who have moved from the county two or three years ago are included. Persons belonging in one town have been assigned to others, and vice versa. Names of persons have been slaughtered without mercy, being bisected, quartered, pruned and grafted in such manner that the original owners are in despair of having a name at all. Occupations have suffered in the hotchpotch manner of doing things, and been indiscriminately parceled out with but little regard to fitness.

A farmer is converted into a builder, a mason is rummaging about the brushes and pots of the paint-shop, a doctor aspires to the sacred order of the priesthood, while the theologian and divine turns from the elimination of tough Greek roots to more susceptible ones of a vegetable nature, and devotes his energy to raising "garden stuff." In the matter of dates, the same careless hand has held sway. People have died before they were born, children have grown old while their parents were in their tippets and pinafores, and, to cap the climax of inconsistencies, a prominent citizen of this place marries his wife when only one year old.

The above is a fair review of the much-talked-of History of Winnebago County, which the firm of H. F. Kett & Co., of Chicago, are now endeavoring to palm off on the people as a faithful record of events.

Some who subscribed have received their book with muttered curses on the publishers; some have compromised and paid something to be let off, while others have positively refused to have the book at any price.

We see but one way for the publishers to extricate themselves from the difficulty, and that is by a revised edition. A good work would sell by the thousands, while the profits of the present enterprise will be wholly lost in attempting to force their abortive work on unwilling people.

We would advise all subscribers to the book to strongly insist that the publishers shall produce such a work as they promised,

and not accept the one now offered. A concert of action can be had in the matter, which will have a telling effect.—*Rockton Herald, Winnebago County, December 20.*

The preceding article is published here to show the consequences of carelessness. The man who canvassed the territory, and which caused the publication of the article, had hitherto furnished an unexceptional list in all respects. Carelessness in writing up his biographies, and in filling up the list of voters, has placed in jeopardy not only his own list, but others, wherever that paper circulates. Our sympathy is entirely on the side of the citizens of a county, especially those who have patronized us. They expect and pay for a correct publication, and should have it. We say, and they so believe, that a work such as we purport to furnish is not only valuable and interesting now, but in future will be looked upon as an authentic history and biographical directory of their county. It is not only a shame to have unnecessary errors handed down to future generations, but is a serious, perplexing and irreparable damage. In another case like the above, we will issue an extra leaf correcting such errors, and send to every subscriber to insert in their book, and charge the expense to the canvasser, if we can trace the error to him, because it is entirely his fault, as it is no difficult matter to get a directory reasonably correct. Our experience is that people will allow a great latitude for unavoidable mistakes, but when it comes to visible gross carelessness they will not submit, nor do we blame them.

Since the above was put in print, we have received the following from S. P. Jennison, who lives in Rockton Township. He says: "I refuse to pay because I am greatly damaged by errors. I was wounded at a place on the James River—you have it Janes; my wife's name is Anny—you have it Fanny; born June

28—you have it January; my daughter's name is Hathalia—you have it Athalia.”

Undoubtedly, every error was made in copying from his original notes. A few seconds of time more in copying would have made the above biography correct, and insured the delivery of a book.

#### THEIR PROSPECTUS.

A prospectus setting forth in detail what the proposed history will contain, is printed on a card and given to every subscriber. The object of this prospectus is to bring to the knowledge of subscribers just what they are to expect, and not have to take the promises of the agent. The contract that is signed by all subscribers reads thus :

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*Gents :* Please bring me one of your histories of \_\_\_\_\_ County — when published, for which I agree to pay you on delivery the sum of \$7.50. I base this subscription on what you promise in your Prospectus, a copy of which has been given me by your agent.

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A miniature map of the State is printed on the back of the card in colors, which is always shown and talked about, so that the subscriber cannot say he did not remember of having been given one of them.

The law emphatically says a man must read what he signs, or abide the consequences. When a man puts his name to the above contract he is fast.



## PROSPECTUS.

Should we meet with sufficient encouragement to complete our proposed history of ——— County, ———, it will contain substantially the following:

**A History of ——— County** will be compiled by our own corps of historians, who will get the facts from the best and most authentic sources, and will embrace the county's early settlement and growth, its pioneers, its improvements, its geological and physical features, etc., etc.—giving an extensive and comprehensive history of the county while most of its early settlers are living, and which will be authoritative history to this date for all time to come.

**A History of the Cities, towns, villages, etc., etc.,** with a sketch of their business and industries, churches and school, societies, associations, etc., etc.

**A List of the Resident Real Estate Owners and Business Men in ——— County,** arranged by Townships, giving name, residence, business and post-office address.

**To our Patrons,** we give name in large type, residence, business and post-office address, when and where born, numbers of acres of land and probable value, politics, religion, public offices held, maiden name of wife, names of children, or other things of a biographical nature, as the patron may wish.

**The War Record of ——— County.** In this will be given, from official records, the names of the men from ——— County who enlisted in the late war of the rebellion, date of enlistment, muster-out, or what became of them; battles their command participated in, etc., etc.

**A History of ——— and of the Northwest,** in a condensed form, illustrated with cuts of important scenes and incidents. This feature alone makes a work of great value and interest. It is compiled very carefully by one of our best historians, and comprises, in as few words as possible, facts in regard to our own State and the great Northwest that should be known by every citizen.

**An Abstract of the Laws of ———,** in a simple and condensed form, embracing laws such as are useful to men in every-day transactions. Also blank forms of Deeds, Notes, Bills, etc.

**The Constitution of the United States and Amendments.**

**General and Local Statistics** of immense value.

**Portraits** of early settlers and prominent men of ——— County.

**A Map of ——— County** will be inserted, locating timber, streams, railroads, churches, schoolhouses, etc., etc.

**Miscellaneous Matters** of great value and interest.

The work will be in royal octavo form, elegantly bound in half leather, spring back, marbled edge, printed on finest paper, and gotten up in the most attractive and durable style, from 600 to 700 pages, price \$7.50, payable on delivery, and will be completed and ready for delivery during the coming Autumn. It is intended to be of such value and interest that we will have the almost unanimous support of the citizens of ——— County. In this immense undertaking, we hope to furnish a work that you will consider of inestimable value, and one upon which your posterity will look as a most valuable heir-loom.

Yours truly,

## OUR VIEWS OF COUNTY HISTORIES.

We would be doing a great wrong to throw any obstacles in the way of the publication of histories of counties. The great mistake of those sections of our Eastern States that were settled several generations ago, was that few sketches of the early settlements were written. The first and second generations have passed away, and most of the history now written concerning them is not reliable. The late Centennial produced a universal desire for the writing, reading and preserving of the historical events of communities and counties. It should be encouraged. Citizens of a county should know who it is that comes into their county to write them a history. Are they a reputable publishing firm? Have they men of sufficient education and ability to do their work as it should be? Have they been long enough in the business to establish themselves and understand the responsibility of such an undertaking? If yes, then every citizen in the county should take a personal interest in the enterprise, and should furnish facts and information. All matter for publication should be read in the presence of a meeting of citizens, and should be approved by them. If biographies are published, they should be given with great care, and be submitted to subscribers before sending to the printer.

A history of a county, if published according to the prospectus we have printed on a preceding page, is of great value if correct.

## WHAT CAUSES THE TROUBLE.

These men follow the business to make money. They go into a county, secure the good-will of the press and some of the more prominent men and early settlers. They are nice, clever fellows; will do the fair thing by these men; consequently, their influence is given to the enterprise with a blindness that is surprising. The secret of success financially is in getting subscribers, and the way subscribers are secured is by writing up the biographies. Experience has taught these men that very few would subscribe for a history of the county, nor would they subscribe for biographies alone; but combine them, and add a miscellaneous lot of other matter, to convey the idea that they are getting a book that has "lots" in it, their names in large type with a sketch of their lives and status of their family matters printed in a book to be handed down, and you have a "big card," that gets many of them. It is a valuable book, and, if correct, should be considered a treasure. As no county history has given satisfaction, and most of them have caused bitter feeling against the publishers, we will explain the cause. The canvassing is carried on on the principle that getting biographies is the only way to procure subscribers. Men are approached by canvassers for information in regard to history. They think the answers to the questions put to them by the canvasser are for publication in the history, and of course cheerfully give them. When an interesting biography is written, the can-



vasser explains the nature of the book, and if he will agree to take one if published, that biography will appear in the biographies of the old settlers and leading citizens. The biography is written; it sounds pretty; will be read by everybody; his neighbors are all in, and he yields. The secret is that the biography must be written in great haste, so as not to give a man time to reflect. It is a well-known fact to the profession that if half the men they approach were allowed time to think over the matter they would not have subscribed. Probably not because they do not want the book with their biography in it, but because they cannot afford to pay so much money for an article they can get along without. They need it for other purposes. In this haste in getting biographies arises nearly all the trouble. Mistakes in spelling names or getting dates occur. The canvasser is in too much of a hurry, and subscribers' thoughts too much controlled by the canvasser to reflect on the importance of getting names and dates correct. The consequence is that men and women are born at an early age; children born before they should be; death occurs before birth, and an endless mass of the most annoying and damaging conflicting statements. Few of the men following this business examine their biographies carefully and ferret out these palpable mistakes, but most of them print from manuscript sent by agents, and trust to Providence, good luck and a rapid delivery to get out. Most of the firms following this business in the West are men who have been canvassers



for H. F. Kett & Co., or Western Historical Company, and their knowledge of the business is confined to canvassing. They think to get good subscription-lists is all there is to the business. As fast as they get their counties completed and commence delivery of their books, they find their mistake. Wm. Le Baron & Co. are an exception. They have careful and experienced men, and do all they can to have everything satisfactory.

H. F. Kett & Co. had difficulty in many of their counties, caused by dishonesty of canvassers, or mistakes. They sold out to the Western Historical Company. That organization thought they had the business in such a shape that satisfaction would be given, but still they found more or less of the same trouble. They then discharged all their men in whom they did not have the utmost confidence, and declare if their publications do not give good satisfaction they will quit the business. One very important reform they have inaugurated is to write up the history in advance of the canvass. They submit all their manuscript to the best informed men, before it is put in type, and again afterward. In this way nearly every error will be discovered.

#### HISTORIES OF COUNTIES IN THE EASTERN STATES.

The older settled States have enough local history to fill volumes. The people are more advanced in age and have come to that stage of life that their thoughts

naturally turn to the past, and when the doings of their early life and of their ancestors are recorded, they are interested. Very few of the men publishing histories of counties in the older States insert the miscellaneous matter, as is done in the West. They get up a larger and finer book, and have very elaborate and well-written histories. They publish biographies and insert views of buildings and portraits of prominent men on a regular scale of rates, as was done in the atlas business in the West and in some counties in the East. In the West, this plan will not work, because a community that had not been overrun in the picture business would be a curiosity. These histories in Eastern States sell at from \$12 to \$15 per volume. While the sales are not so large for the book, the picture, portrait and biography business is carried on to an almost impossible extent. As an illustration, Monroe County, N. Y., gave Everts 3,000 subscribers at \$12.50 per volume, and over \$30,000 in the other departments.

There are a number of firms in the Middle and Eastern States that are making histories of counties in this way. They are mostly men who formerly worked for Everts. We do not know how satisfactory their publications have been, but have been informed that the most of them leave disgust behind.

#### L. H. EVERTS.

L. H. Everts, or any firm with which his name is connected, will be found to be genuine. He will make them as good a history as can possibly be written.

He employs none but the best men; he will not take an obscure man. The men having charge of his historical departments are men well-known in literary circles. In going to the expense he does, he must receive large support. When he publishes a history of a county, its citizens can console themselves in case of dissatisfaction, that no one else could have done near as well, and they have a volume that cannot be excelled in any particular. We deem it our duty to say this much from what we have seen of his late publications, at the same time knowing the gentleman will feel bitter toward us for publishing this book, in which we have been compelled to so often use his name.

#### DISSATISFIED SUBSCRIBERS.

As this book will reach many men who have been caught by this county history scheme and have not settled but intend to contest it in law, we can only say that in the end they will be beaten. These men have a great advantage over the citizen. They have a large amount of business for attorneys whom they employ on a small commission. When suits are brought they are commenced in a remote part of the county. Rather than go to the trouble of traveling such a distance, employing an attorney and other expenses, the most of them settle. If one does conclude to fight, the publishers get a continuance on some pretext, and if beaten before a justice, which they expect to be, they appeal the case. As their contracts are made so that

they have the advantage, the dissatisfied subscribers must prove non-fulfillment of contract or fraud, which is very hard to do. Men on the witness-stand can only testify to what they actually know, and not from hearsay. Shrewd lawyers lead them into contradictory statements and it is usually found that the contract has been fulfilled sufficiently to satisfy the terms of the prospectus and contract. If otherwise, the case is carried to the Supreme Court, as it is an agreement among this class of men to never be beaten. When there is a serious error that affects the subscriber, they usually compromise or drop the matter. When they commence a suit they are pretty sure to have a good case. The trouble and expense of contesting a single case costs too much. The attorney's fees will be more than the price of the book. The best way is to settle on the best terms possible, and profit by the lesson.





# LIGHTNING-RODS.

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Of all the humbugs under the sun none has so completely swept the board and demonstrated the gullibility of Americans as those which may be classed under this heading. Newspapers have written them up, courts of justice have exposed them in all their trickery, and victimized farmers have cried aloud with mortification and anger, but all in vain. Year after year the lightning-rod men go swarming over the country, gathering in the grangers like shocks of wheat that are ready for the thresher, extracting from them the kernels of value, and leaving nothing behind but straws of lightning-rods and chaff of villainous contracts.

## DO RODS PROTECT?

Some contend that rods do protect buildings; but we have often talked candidly with agents, and have never yet found one who really believed in the theory. They all look upon it as a grand swindle, and in just the same light as though they had sold a farmer a patent right. Both are sold by smooth talking and overpersuasion and by granting time. If there was virtue in lightning-rods every insurance company

would require rods on houses; but, as it now is, if they think there is protection in rods, they consider the danger of their getting out of repair more than balances the good they will do.

Only a few weeks ago, we met an old lightning-rod man with a new rod called the "Insulator." This was a rod running the length of the house, and at each end running up the usual distance, and on the ends were the same points as now used. The advantage in this was, that lightning, striking one point, would follow the rod and pass off at the other end; and if lightning should strike both at the same time, the currents would pass each other.

This man had the whole lightning-rod business at his tongue's end; had an immense battery to show the workings of the new invention, and demonstrated clearly that, in the present rod, if the insulators are wet, the current follows the dampness. This man's insulators being upright, were so arranged that the under part of them was always dry. He also had a scrap-book filled with articles clipped from newspapers, giving cases of buildings being struck by lightning in the past few years that had rods on. The business of his firm was to demonstrate the danger of rods that conduct the electricity to the ground, and erect his "insulators" in their places. But whether rods do what it is represented they will or not, it is all wrong to run the business on the theory that it must be done by talking, crowding and swindling; and every man who has a rod must pay 6 per cent for the rod and 60 per cent

to have it talked into him, put up and collected. The business has always been looked upon as a swindle; but many good men believe in rods, and succumb to the mob rather than risk their property and the lives of their families.

#### MAGNITUDE OF THE BUSINESS.

There are over two millions of buildings in the United States which are adorned with rods, put in place at an average cost to the buyers of the useless metals of no less than 60 cents per foot. These rods cost an average of 6 cents per foot, and the balance of the 60 cents goes to the proprietors and agents for the expenses of selling the rods, putting them on the buildings and making discounts on notes given by purchasers in lieu of cash. One can easily see that the profits to retail sellers are perfectly enormous, and warrant the hazard of lawsuits and threshings which the venders constantly incur at the hands of outraged men. Can be sold by merchants and put on buildings by carpenters.

No skill is required to place the rods in position on the buildings; for any intelligent man, with a ladder, hammer and gimlet, can do the work. Surely, any dealer in hardware can carry a stock of rods just as easily as of stoves and tinware. But the idea lies right here: no man would ever think of going to town and buying a bill of lightning-rods. The opinion that they are not what they are represented to be is universal, and no one has either the inclination or

desire to face public sentiment by throwing his money away voluntarily. The truth is, that rods can be sold only by oily agents, who are loaded full of answers to any argument which a farmer can produce, and who are able to overawe a man not fully up in the methods of combatting the best of talkers. No man really wants a lightning-rod on his house, and it has been repeatedly demonstrated that more injury has been done to buildings through defective rods than by lightning where they were not used.

To expose the folly of purchasers in allowing themselves to be swindled, and to show the magnitude of the operations of the lightning-rod vampires we have taken account of the workings of some of the prominent firms for the past year, and here reproduce the result of those calculations.

#### HOW THEY ARE SOLD.

One of the inducements offered by the firms in this branch of trade is in the form of a premium to the agent who shall make the largest sales in a given time; and also another premium to the man getting the largest amount per foot, the most contracts per week, and the largest aggregate. The usual prices range from 45 to 76 cents per foot; the cost of which is from 4 to 9 cents per foot; and the trimmings cost: \$3 each for points and balls, \$6 for vanes, \$5 for arrows, and the price of each brace is equal to four feet of rod.



We have learned from reliable authority that a firm in Iowa, having about thirty wagons out last year, offered premiums. Their rate was  $67\frac{1}{2}$  cents per foot. Their best man averaged 63 cents; their poorest, 48 cents. The most successful man averaged five contracts per week; the poorest, one and a half. The best man's contracts averaged \$230; the poorest, \$120.

There are as many different plans of work as there are companies in the field; for each one has its own system of selling. There are men connected with the firms who devote their time to devising new "catches;" and as soon as the ones now in vogue are exposed, others will be invented to take their places. There are men whose minds are fertile in such resources, and who live wholly by preparing schemes for the pecuniary injury of mankind.

In each lightning-rod contract there is some hidden "twist" which is not discernible until it is too late to avert trouble. It naturally requires a peculiar class of men to place the business properly before the farmers, and the firms choose canvassers who have plenty of nerve, an endless amount of cheek, and are glib of tongue. These fellows are good judges of human nature and are well posted in current matters. The canvassing party consists, generally, of two men—one of whom is the agent and the other an assistant, in case of need. They go about in a fine turn-out, and make a pleasant impression on first sight. No suggestion of their business is in their rig or manner.

The agent gets from \$100 to \$250 a month, and has the best of everything. The driver is sent along to take the agent's part if a former victim chances to prove more than a match for the agent.

THE ORGANIZATION, WHEN READY FOR BUSINESS, consists of five buggies, with a canvasser in each, and nearly always a driver (fighting-man); one wagon loaded with rods, and two or three men to follow a few days behind and put on the rods. Some firms have their "settler" (who is usually the foreman) go with this wagon, and they help him to fight it out. Others have their settler follow a few days after.

#### THE CANVASSER'S PIECE.

When a farmer is found who has a nice place and unrodded buildings, the agent stops and makes himself agreeable. He tells the farmer about the latest news, speaks advisedly of crops and takes great delight in fine stock. He is glad to see such improvements on the place, and believes that the farmer thoroughly understands the business of farming. Often paving the way by such means, the agent remarks that he used to live in an adjoining county, and owned a farm there until the spring before, when he had a good offer and sold out; since that time, he has been looking about him for a farm that suited him, with the intention of buying. The farmer's place is the nicest



THE LIGHTNING-ROD AGENT CANVASSING A FARMER.

*Canvasser*.—"This point will draw the lightning 200 feet from its course, and convey it to the ground. It has saved millions of lives, and tens of millions of property."



one he has encountered for many a day. So he leads the game on, until he finally says that he has been out of employment so long that he was persuaded to accept a flattering offer from a lightning-rod firm—the same firm that rodded his own house last year—and is now engaged in working the trade up in that section. When he went into the business he had no idea that there was such a prejudice against it as he finds; and, really, he has nothing to say in extenuation of what he hears about the trickery of some agents. His house, however, allows nothing of the sort, and he proposes to do business on the square. He accepted the place more on account of the freedom it gave him to roam about and see the country previous to locating permanently. The idea he had was to make the business a respectable one by demonstrating the actual good derived from the rods as protectors of property. The farmer would admit that there was great danger from lightning. See the trees that had been shivered about the country, and look at the innumerable newspaper accounts of fatal accidents by lightning. Farm-buildings are great conductors of the dangerous fluid, and especially so are barns filled with hay. All these chances of injury could be obviated by the judicious erection of rods. Now, some agents were base enough to take advantage of their calling and place unnecessary rods about a house or barn merely to increase their bills. He didn't propose to do anything of the sort. He knew just how many were needed and just where they should go, and did not propose to make



use of any but solid arguments to secure trade. It was a fact, the smooth-tongued agent asserted, that the best insurance companies would not take risks on buildings that were not protected by rods; and moneyed men would not make loans on property unless the buildings were provided with them, because the hazard of destruction by lightning was so great that mortgages placed upon such securities were practically absorbed in the landed property itself. Then the agent ended with a peroration worthy of an Ingersoll, in which he depicted the farmer's family shivering with terror during a thunder-shower, while all that agony might be averted by a trifling investment in lightning-rods. It was every man's duty to protect his family as much from the elements as from the hand of the midnight assassin, etc.

All this confidential talk ends in the agent being called upon to make an estimate of the probable cost of rodding the farmer's house. It is usually decided that from \$20 to \$35 will do the work exactly as it should be done; and the agent, in a burst of sublime generosity toward a fellow-farmer, remarks that if the bill exceeds \$35 he will pay \$5 toward it out of his own pocket, thereby leaving the farmer to infer that the work cannot possibly exceed \$35. On the strength of this assurance, the farmer signs the following contract:

## THE CONTRACT.

A good lightning-rod, properly applied, is the cheapest and best insurance known.

\_\_\_\_\_, 187 .  
 Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, please erect, at your earliest convenience, your lightning-rods on my \_\_\_\_\_ according to your rules, of which said \_\_\_\_\_ I am the owner, for which I agree to pay you 67½ cents per foot, and \$3 each for points, \$6 each for vanes, \$5 each for arrows, \$2.50 each for balls and \$2 each for braces, cash, when completed, or note due on the 1st day of \_\_\_\_\_ next.

If not paid according to this contract, payable at \_\_\_\_\_.

## GUARANTEE AGAINST FIRE.

They generally give a guarantee that, if buildings are supplied according to rules of company and are destroyed by lightning, they will pay \$1,000; but they always get out of this by contending that, through carelessness, rods were allowed to get off their fastenings or out of repair, and, of course, refuse to pay and, contend that a building properly rodded cannot be struck by lightning.

## GIVING INSURANCE POLICIES.

This was a big dodge, and made a pretty clean sweep for a few years, until a number of the lightning-rod men were thrown into jails for giving them. They carried along policies of insurance signed in blank. The companies were located in West Virginia, which is the only State that has no laws against fraudulent insurance companies. These companies hail from some little, obscure village, located

in the barren mountains of that State, and sell policies for 50 cents each to any who want them. They have no capital and never pay a cent when they lose. As soon as they meet with enough losses to hurt them, they burst, take a new name and go ahead again. These companies have done a large business in the cities among a class who want cheap insurance and do not investigate. But they have had their day, as far as cities are concerned.

#### WHERE THE TROUBLE COMES IN.

The trouble begins in a few days after the papers are signed, or as soon as the agents get through canvassing in that part of the country.

Two or three men will put in a sudden appearance, with a wagon loaded with lightning-rods, and be so overwhelmingly full of business as to be unable to answer a single question. They cannot even look at anything except the house that has been placed at their mercy. If the farmer offers a word, he is coolly snubbed and treated as though he was an interloper, while the brazen fellows awe him into complete docility. Meanwhile the men produce ladders, tools and rods and proceed to literally cover all the buildings on the place with a network of rods. To these are added points, balls, vanes and trimmings wherever they can be made to hang on.

## THE WAY THEY GET SO MANY RODS ON.

The rods are run down the side of the buildings and deep into the ground, while some gangs have the boldness to lay them in trenches through the yard and away out into an adjoining lot. Every possible means is resorted to to increase the number of feet of rod, because the contract stipulates the payment at so much per foot. The farmer complacently looks on, when he finds that he cannot prevent the men doing as they please, and chuckles to himself over the thought that he is getting all that work for \$35. When he speaks to the men about it, they curtly tell him that they know nothing about the price and are simply working under orders.

## THE "SETTLER."

When the job is done and the men are away from the neighborhood, along comes the "lightning man" of the party. He is called the foreman, and his duty is to collect the bill. He has a fighting-man with him, has a fine turn-out, and moves on the farmer as though there was no such thing as escape from the consequences. He presents a bill like the following:

## THE BILL.

They put on an ordinary building from 100 to 300 feet, running two ground-rods from nine to fifteen feet into the ground; they put on from two to six points





THE LIGHTNING ROD "SETTLER."

Victim.—"Hundred and sixty dollars! That feller said 'twould be no more than twenty-eight dollars."

and balls, vanes, braces, etc., wherever they can and all they can. Then, of course, barns and other out-buildings make a bill never below \$80, and as high as \$500.

## LIGHTNING ROD NOTES.

\$—— Post Office—— Date—— 187

On the 1st day of —— after date, for value received, I, the undersigned, residing in the township of ——, county of ——, State of ——, owning the buildings on which the lightning-rods were erected, for which this note is given (said rods being for my individual benefit), promise to pay to —— or bearer the sum of —— dollars, with use, payable at —— at ——.

If not paid when due, payable at Indianapolis, Indiana.

Location of residence.

Street, ——; road, ——; Distance from post office, —— miles; direction ——.

Agents will rewrite signature plain on line below.

No. ——

I certify that the within note was taken by me, and that it was signed in my presence by the person who owes this debt, and that no bill is unpaid or receipt given against this note, or any part thereof.

—— Salesman.

Some States make it a criminal offense to take notes for patent rights or lightning-rods without specifying in the notes that they were given for that purpose.

## HOW LIGHTNING-ROD NOTES ARE SOLD.

Before the business got in such bad repute, notes brought 75 to 90 cents on the dollar; but now the

average is 50 to 60 cents. There are always men in every community who almost eke out a living by buying these notes. When an advance agent strikes a section he almost always goes to one of these men and makes a bargain in advance for the notes he may take. This scalper (who is often a banker) points out the man for him to "go for," and tells him just how to approach and how to manipulate him.

When the farmer looks at that document he realizes what it is to be struck by lightning. The victim assures the collector that the work and rod were to be but \$35, and tells how the agent promised he would pay \$5 out of his own pocket in case the bill exceeded that sum. The foreman puts on a swagger and says that the canvasser is simply hired just as he himself is, and if he is willing to sacrifice his commissions through friendly feeling there is no law to prevent him doing so. He thereupon credits the farmer \$5 on the bill. He then assumes a still more domineering manner, and presents the original contract, which binds the farmer to pay so much per foot for rods, so much for each ball, point, vane and brace. The "rules of the company" were observed, and the farmer is caught fast. If not paid according to contract, at a distant city, which is another kink he had not noticed, they make it payable at their headquarters, which is away off somewhere, and compels the maker of the contract to go there to fight them. There is no use of arguing or refusing to pay, since the clause making the bill payable at a dis-



tant point in case of refusal to settle at once only threatens to add costs of a suit in the United States Court to the face of the bill. The agent tells him that he has paid \$5 (through the original agent's guarantee), which is credited on the bill, thus binding the whole matter, and there is no possible escape. If the farmer threatens personal chastisement, the big fighting-man ambles quickly to the front. There is no help now, and a note is accordingly given in settlement of the account. Rather than become the laughing-stock of his neighbors, the farmer closes the matter out by giving a note offered by the foreman, on the back of which is a property statement. The foreman usually coddles the farmer into making a statement that he is worth more property than he really owns, through some misconception of what he is doing, and thereby catches him a second time, as such a false statement makes the signer liable for fraud.

On every hand the farmer is taken in, and becomes a thoroughly-victimized man. The note, with interest, falls into the hands of some money-shark, and is crowded to full payment.

The rods on his house usually blow off or become so disarranged as to be a source of constant danger, and the end of the matter generally is that the farmer tears them down in disgust, and denies his family promised luxuries or real necessities for months to come, in order to recuperate his weakened finances.



## OUR THEORY AND ADVICE.

If the theory be true that lightning is drawn to these points and conducted to the ground, it is very evident that the usual rods have not surface enough to convey it in large quantities. On the other hand, when the rods become overloaded, the electricity must leave the rod and, consequently, scatter into the building. The only safe way is to have rods with very large surface, say one or two inches in diameter. We think the best way is to place a pole a few feet from each end of the building, and have it extend a few feet higher than the building. Have a merchant furnish a rod, which he can at 8 cents a foot with profit, and a point which costs 40 cents. Fasten these rods to the poles and you have all the protection that can be, and at an expense for a two-story house of about \$7.

## HOW A HUMORIST WAS "RODDED."

In one of his inimitable sketches, published some years ago in the *Galaxy*, Mark Twain, who had but just married and begun housekeeping in Buffalo, tells how he was approached by an irrepressible agent, who wanted to furnish his house with lightning-rods. He tells the story that he had just settled himself in his comfortable chair in his study, and begun the composition of a wonderful, or what promised to prove the most wonderful, essay on "political economy" ever penned by a humorist, when he was summoned down-stairs by

the announcement that a stranger desired to confer with him. He went down, confronted the intruder, and inquired his business, "struggling all the time to keep a tight rein on my seething political economy ideas, and not to let them break away from me or get tangled in their harness." He found the stranger cool and collected. The interview is thus graphically related :

He said he was sorry to disturb me, but as he was passing he noticed that I needed some lightning-rods. I said, "Yes, yes—go on—what about it?" He said there was nothing about it, in particular—nothing except he would like to put them up for me. I try to appear (to strangers) to be an old housekeeper; consequently, I said in an off-handed way, that I had been intending for some time to have six or eight lightning-rods put up, but—, The stranger started and looked inquiringly at me, but I was serene. He said he would rather have my custom than any man's in town. I said all right, and started off to wrestle with my great subject again, when he called me back and said it would be necessary to know exactly how many "points" I wanted put up, what parts of the house I wanted them on, and what quality of rod I preferred. It was close quarters for a man not used to the exigencies of housekeeping, but I went through creditably, and he probably never suspected that I was a novice. I told him to put up eight "points," and put them all on the roof, and use the best quality of rod. He said he could furnish the "plain" article at 20 cents a foot; "coppered," 25 cents; "zinc-plated, spiral twist," at 30 cents, that would stop a streak of lightning any time, no matter where it was bound, and "render its errand harmless and its further progress apocryphal." I said apocryphal was no slouch of a word, emanating from the source it did, but philology aside, I liked the spiral twist, and would take that brand. Then he said he *could* make 250 feet answer, but to do it right, and make the best job in town of it, and attract the admiration of the just and unjust alike, and com-

pel all parties to say they never saw a more symmetrical and hypothetical display of lightning rods since they were born, he supposed he really couldn't get along without 400, though he was not vindictive, and trusted he was willing to try. I said go ahead and use 400, and make any kind of a job he pleased out of it, but let me go back to my work.

But Twain was not through with his man as easily as he thought. He had no sooner got seated to his work once more, when he was called down again. The lightning-rod agent was found in the flower-garden, his hat-brim tilted forward, one eye shut, and the other gazing admiringly in the direction of the roof. What was his surprise to find that the man had put the entire eight rods on the one chimney, and the latter complacently declared that he had never seen anything quite so deliriously picturesque in all his life! Nothing on earth but Niagara Falls was superior to it in the way of natural scenery. All that was needed now, the agent believed, to make the house a perfect balm to the eye, was to kind of touch up the other chimneys a little, and thus "add to the generous *coup d'œil* a soothing uniformity of achievement which would allay the excitement naturally consequent upon the first *coup d'état*." He then figured up an estimate, and said that about eight more rods scattered about the roof would about fix Twain right, and he guessed 500 feet of stuff would do it; and added that the first eight had got a little the start of him, so to speak, and used up a mere trifle of material more than he had calculated on—a hundred feet or along there.

Twain told him to put up eight more, and 500 feet of spiral twist. An hour afterward he was sent for once more. The lightning-rod man said that he would rather have died than interrupt him, but when he was employed to do a job, and that job was expected to be done in a clean, neat, workmanlike manner, and when it was finished, and fatigue urged him to seek the rest and recreation he stood so much in need of, and he was about to do it, but looked up and saw at a glance that all the calculations had been a little out, and if a thunder-storm were to come up and that house, which he felt a personal interest in, stood there with nothing on earth to protect it but sixteen lightning-rods—

“Let us have peace!” shrieked Twain. “Put up a hundred and fifty! Put some on the kitchen! Put a dozen on the barn! Put a couple on the cow! Put one on the cook! Scatter them all over the persecuted place till it looks like a zinc-plated, spiral-twisted, silver-mounted cane-brake! Move! Use up all the material you can get your hands on; and when you run out of lightning-rods, put up ram-rods, cam-rods, stair-rods, piston-rods—*anything* that will pander to your dismal appetite for artificial scenery, and bring respite to my raging brain and healing to my lacerated soul!” Wholly unmoved—further that to smile sweetly—the agent simply turned back his wristbands daintily and said he would now “proceed to hump himself.”



Twain had once more thrown himself into the composition of his great political economy essay, when the fiend once more interrupted him. This time he paid the bill—\$900—and the agent departed.

Under the heading, "Three Days Later," which serves to conclude this sketch of the lightning-rod experience of Twain, we find the following sequel to the whole affair :

We are all about worn out. For four-and-twenty hours our bristling premises were the talk and wonder of the town. The theaters languished, for the happiest scenic inventions were tame and commonplace compared with my lightning-rods. Our street was blocked night and day with spectators, and among them were many who came from the country to see. It was a blessed relief, on the second day, when a thunder-storm came up and the lightning began to "go for" my house, as the historian Josephus quaintly phrases it. It cleared the galleries, so to speak. In five minutes there was not a spectator within half a mile of my place; but all the high houses about that distance away were full—windows, roof, and all. And well they might be; for all the falling stars and Fourth-of-July fireworks of a generation put together and rained down simultaneously out of heaven in one brilliant shower upon one helpless roof would not have any advantage of the pyrotechnic display that was making my house so magnificently conspicuous in the general gloom of the storm. By actual count, the lightning struck at my establishment seven hundred and sixty-four times in forty minutes, but tripped on one of those faithful rods every time and slid down the spiral twist and shot into the earth before it probably had time to be surprised at the way the thing was done. And through all that bombardment, only one patch of slats was ripped up; and that was because, for a single instant, the rods in the vicinity were transporting all the lightning they could possibly accommodate. Well, nothing was ever seen like it since the world began. For one whole day and

night not a member of my family stuck his head out of the window but he got the hair snatched off it as smooth as a billiard-ball; and, if the reader will believe me, not one of us ever dreamt of stirring abroad. But at last the awful siege came to an end, because there was absolutely no more electricity left in the clouds above us within grappling distance of my insatiable rods. *Then* I sallied forth and gathered daring workmen together, and not a bite or a nap did we take till the premises were utterly stripped of all their terrific armament except just three rods on the house, one on the kitchen and one on the barn—and, behold, these remain there even unto this day. And then—and not till then—the people ventured to use our street again. I will remark here, in passing, that, during that fearful time, I did not continue my essay upon political economy. I am not, even yet, settled enough in nerve and brain to resume it.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.—Parties having need of three thousand two hundred and eleven feet of best quality zinc-plated spiral twist lightning-rod stuff, and sixteen hundred and thirty-one silver-tipped points, all in tolerable repair (and, although much worn by use, still equal to any ordinary emergency), can hear of a bargain by addressing the publishers of this magazine.



## PATENT RIGHTS.

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The very name of patent rights is suggestive of pecuniary losses to the ordinary reader, and awakens a desire to know more of the inner workings of the business, to the end that the insidious assaults of the venders may be warded off.

The same cause which leads to a thousand other troubles influences the purchaser of a patent right, and that is the desire to make money easily and rapidly. There are plenty of men in all walks of life who seek this golden secret, but the broadest field for speculators is among the farmers. The laborious, plodding life led by most of them, aids to enliven the pictures of wealth and ease so graphically drawn by the wily salesmen, and hundreds of farmers have invested their little hoard in some privilege to manufacture a gate, or a windmill, or an implement, that proved a sorry load.

One reason why so many patent rights fail utterly is because it is the farmer's disposition to give up the moment he encounters difficulty, and wring his hands and weep. The "sell" he so often loudly denounces

may be a valuable article in itself, worthy of manufacture, and sure of sale if rightly put before the public. But a man entirely untrained to mercantile life, and above all to the life of a canvasser, cannot sell a patented machine to his neighbors. He has not the gift of tongue which captured himself when the pleasing agent sold him the right, nor has he a thorough mastery of the art of putting a case to a desired purchaser. The agent assured him that the article would sell on its own merits ; and so it would if its merits were but made known. He cannot tell a neighbor, with whom he has associated for years, and who has heard him stammer and sputter in prayer-meeting, or some political convention, what the machine really is. There is a feeling of awkwardness and bashfulness possessing him, when he leaves the topics of corn and hogs, and goes to that of selling machinery, which is akin to the sensations experienced when he attempts to address a schoolroomful of neighbors. He is frightened at the sound of his own voice. He finds himself wondering what his friend will think, and if the article is really what it is claimed. Then he forgets most of the strong points used by the agent who sold to him, and tells only the weak ones which came to his own mind originally as objections to purchasing. His neighbor puts one or two questions to him which he had never thought of before, and the utter helplessness of his situation comes rolling over him like a wave, when he realizes that he can't answer the inquiries. The neighbor gains the controlling influence in the conver-



sation, and presses his advantage. The tables are turned. Instead of being a strong advocate of the machine, the farmer first apologizes for it, and then retires in absolute rout, leaving the neighbor to feel that the thing is a fraud any way, from which he himself has happily escaped, but with which the farmer has been gloriously bitten.

When the farmer contemplates his failure, his morbid mind grows more and more diseased, and he concludes that the article is a swindle at best. So he places the sample as far out of sight as possible, in the barn or garret, and nurses his wrath against patent-right men by being cross to his patient, hard-working wife, and by refusing the children some little pleasure on the ground of his poverty in these hard times. The business failed because the wrong man had hold of it. In some men's hands the investment would have paid well; but the farmer imagined that he could do as the agent did, and was deceived in his calculations. The farmer was, probably, as intelligent a man as the canvasser, but he had not studied for the business. His own forte was to raise cattle, and good ones, too, probably; and were the agent to venture in such a speculation he would ignominiously fail. In short, it is a fair comparison to say that the farmer expected to accomplish as unreasonable a result with himself, as though he had planned to make his fine-wool sheep good dairy cattle, and his blooded cows raise high-priced fleeces. He stepped out of his sphere, and met with inevitable loss.

Another point may be made here, before entering upon a description of the methods of selling rights. One farmer hates to deal with another. That is a fact. Did it ever occur to you before? Well, just make a mental estimate of the number of farmers who have gone into mercantile business and succeeded, within your personal knowledge. The number is small, is it not? "Farmers' stores," so-called, are run by men who are not farmers, but shrewd fellows who catch their custom by that title. It is not true that farmers will patronize a seedy-looking canvasser rather than a good-appearing fellow. Good appearance wins the granger. We know of scores of farmers who have depended upon the support of their old neighbors, in general trade, but have gone to the wall. Farmers prefer to deal with experienced merchants. They turn away from an old friend who has "gone to town and put on style in the goods business."

That rule works with double force when a farmer goes into a patent-right dicker. So many of his neighbors have been bitten by sharp canvassers that they get disgusted at once when they see a neighbor starting out to make money by outside speculations. The truth is that jealousy is deeper and more pervading among farmers than with any other class of men. They hate to see a rival succeed faster than they do. Let one man in a community put up a fine barn, or go into the "extravagance" of a good house, and every neighbor will immediately say: Well, if

he can spend that much, I guess I can. So communities develop about uniformly. We do not condemn this feeling; but, on the other hand, approve of it, to a certain extent. The growth of States is based on nearly this idea.

However, in other than actual improvements, the sentiment of jealousy works to the farmer's injury. The class is not mutually helpful. Individual cases give contradiction to this statement, but only serve to confirm the general rule.

Farmers are frequently approached by men who have a remarkable gate patent, or some new plan for fencing. There is an infinite variety of articles offered, but the principle is always the same: the purpose of the agents is to make money out of their patrons. After a farmer has purchased his right to sell or manufacture, the matter is never prosecuted to a profitable issue. But the greatest danger lies in the signing of notes, through some misapprehension of their meaning, or because of the promises of agents that no advantage will ever be taken of the act. Advantage is always taken of every possible weakness, and that fact may be counted on with absolute certainty.

In this same line of swindles comes the right to retail certain "copyrighted" varieties of seeds. The seed and potato schemes were worked to a most astonishing extent some years since, and there still continues a good deal of that sort of humbug in the West. Common grains are sent out by agents, with wonderful stories concerning their value and peculiar adapt-

ability to the region in which the farmer chances to live. Contracts are made with "the house" to supply a given quantity for a fixed price, and before any one has time to know just what the article is, the seller has discounted the notes and left the country.

It is impossible for us in our brief space to give all the patent-right swindles that have been palmed off on the public by these sharks. We can hardly speak to a man on the subject but he will tell us that he once bought a right to sell a washing machine, churn, wagon-brake, or something of the kind. And we never met a man who ever got a dollar in return.

#### PATENT RIGHTS OF VALUE AND NEVER FOR SALE.

The reader will bear in mind that a patent with merits will never be for sale except to the most intimate friends of the patentee. He may not be able to manufacture his patented article, and takes in friends to furnish the necessary funds. No man ever came around to you to sell an article that a manufacturer thought there was merit enough in to manufacture and put on the market. The things for sale are those that look big; but there is a missing link somewhere.

#### OUR EXPERIENCE.

For instance, a few years ago the writer of this article became acquainted with a couple of gentlemen who had a valuable invention in which there were millions. It was an attachment for a gas-meter, to



hold a half-gallon of naphtha, so that the gas would pass over the fluid and absorb the fumes that arose from it. It would save 50 per cent of the gas-bills. The two largest consumers of gas in the city were selected, and allowed to use the attachment one month. Sure enough, their bills were reduced one-half, and they so stated in a card, which was published. We saw a fortune, and would probably have invested had our pocket been large enough, or rather if the owners of the patent had not been too high in their figures. They had sold the patent to a neighboring city having 12,000 inhabitants for \$10,000, and before they had consummated the bargain with our neighbors the "cat in the meal" was discovered. In two or three months the fumes of the naphtha had deposited an oily substance in the pipes and clogged them up so that the gas-pipes had to be torn up until the difficulty was discovered. The new invention would prove a costly one if all the floors to the building would have to be torn up every few months and pipes drilled out.

#### HAY-FORKS.

Let us take an actual occurrence as an illustration of the manner in which one variety of patents is sold. A certain party invented a hay-fork. It had some good points about it, but they were more than counter-balanced by the one fact that the operation of the machine depended entirely upon its being perfectly free from rust, well oiled and always in complete order.

The least moisture in the hay soon clogged the working of the spring, and one winter's neglect utterly ruined the fork. It was constructed on the principle of a spiral prod. The spear was inserted into the load of hay by pressing the spear down, by means of handles. The resistance set a screw in motion, attached to which were steel points which may be likened to immense cork-screws. These were projected into the hay, and held there by a ratched gauge. The man on the load then hauled away on a rope run through the barn and over the mow by a series of pulleys. A small cord traversed the pulleys, also, and was at the operator's hand outside. When the fork had reached the hay, the operator pulled the cord, loosening the ratchet-pin and letting the spring inside the spear expand, thereby withdrawing the spiral prongs and dropping the hay. This fork would unload a large wagon at three lifts. The only possible advantage was in the saving of time with teams, as it took a small force of men to mow away. In case of threatened rain, the fork was handy. It could be rigged to stack in the field, but the cost of rigging was more than labor bills by the old method. If a storm came up, and the fork was not kept covered with grease, of course the spring failed to respond both in setting the spear and in dropping the hay. So much by way of description, and to prove how easily farmers are deceived by a glib talker.

The owner of this patent, which was to revolutionize labor in the field, had a large territory in the West to

sell. He employed many agents, and made a good deal of money in the early days of his work; but finally let his territory get cold on his hands, and lost every cent of his easily-gotten wealth. He sold the right to use, and disposed of "agencies" by counties.

#### HOW A PATENT-RIGHT MAN GULLED A FARMER.

This man had a brother, who was a clergyman. The preacher could talk fluently, and was a man well calculated for canvassing. It transpired that the summer vacation came at a time when the patentee wanted agents most, and so he engaged the parson to travel through Ohio and sell the rights. The newly-appointed agent met with good success. His earnest manner, and his desire to join in family worship at evening-time struck the right chord. He sold large areas.

One Saturday afternoon, he chanced to find himself in the neighborhood of a rich farmer, who had, first and last, invested not less than \$7,000 in worthless patent rights. That was his weakness. The parson knew of this failing and made up his mind to stick him for a county or two on the tines of his wonderful fork. It was nearly supper-time when the agent drove up to the farmer's gate. The man came out and inquired his business. The parson told him that he was selling a patent right, and wanted to arrange to stay over Sunday with him. The farmer got mad and declared, by all that was great and good, that he would

have nothing to do with him. However, the parson told the irate man that he had driven far and could not think of going on ten or twelve miles further that night. He wanted to stay there, out of mercy to his horse. At last the farmer consented to a compromise. If the agent would positively promise not to mention the subject of patent rights during his stay at the house, the farmer would take him in. The agent readily made the concession, and the doors of the residence were graciously thrown open.

After a good supper, the parson observed that selling patent rights was not his regular profession. He was a minister of the Gospel, and trusted that divine service was maintained in the vicinity. The farmer, who was a deacon in the church, was rejoiced to hear of this, and informed the traveling parson that they usually had service at an adjoining church, but, unfortunately, that week their Pastor was away. In an adroit manner, the parson observed that he was willing to serve them, if they chose to accept his offer, and would be pleased to preach on the following day. The proposition was at once entertained, and messengers sent about the neighborhood to inform the people.

The next morning, the patent-parson put a sermon in his pocket and started for the little church. A fair-sized audience greeted him, and he announced a repetition of the services that evening. All day long the clergyman won the deacon over, and made warm friends with him. When evening came, the church was full. A good sermon was preached, and a volun-



tary collection taken up, to compensate the parson. He refused to accept the \$10 thus raised, but contributed it toward the procuring of new books for the Sunday-school library. This was the big card, and completely carried the deacon "off of his feet," as horsemen say.

Monday morning came and not one word had been uttered concerning patent rights. As the parson walked out to get into his wagon, carrying with him his sample fork, the deacon followed and half-laughingly inquired what sort of a patent he had. The parson was grave and uncommunicative in an instant. Said he: "Mr. Jones, I promised you that I would not mention my business during my stay. I have adhered to my contract. Good-morning, sir; and thanks for your hospitality."

"Hold on a minute," cried the deacon; "there is no harm in telling me what the patent is on."

The parson called out to Mrs. Jones that she had better take her husband in, as the contract extended no further than the gate. If Mr. Jones crossed the line, he did so at his peril; for he would sell all the territory he possibly could to any man found in the road.

This half taunt spurred Jones on, and he went out into the road. He began to examine the fork, and grew so deeply interested in it that he urged the parson to go over to a neighbor's field and try it there. The parson accepted the challenge, and away the worthy deacon went. Before he returned home

that night he had bought two counties! He never realized enough out of the machine to pay for the papers. Long before the season was over, the farmers in both those counties had found out the weak points in the fork, and had heard how the deacon had been bit by the eloquent parson. He was spoken of as anything but a shrewd man, and left to worry out his chagrin over another case of victimization. The whole operation entered into by the parson—his preaching, and all—was a part of a deliberate plan; and the tool was known as the “Parson’s Fork” for many a month.

All farmers do not have to contend with such men as the parson, however. The majority of patent-right salesmen are real sharpers, who offer a glittering bait on a false basis. They are frauds of the first water.

#### HAY-LOADER.

Some fifteen years ago a small army of cunning Yankees started from the New England States with a patent for loading hay, it being a simple contrivance to avoid labor. The machinery was fastened on the wagon. It consisted of a swinging lever, on the end of which were a couple of pulleys, forming what is known as “block and tackle.” Through these pulleys passed a rope, on the end of which was a hay-fork capable of encircling a cock of hay. The engineer sat on a cushioned spring seat of the wagon, with an umbrella to shade him from the scorching sun of a hay-field. He held the other end of the rope, and

loaded the hay by a slight twist of the wrist. These men were well adapted to their business. They were all under one head, and had a thorough organization. They did not take along large machines. They preferred the beautiful little brass model hay-loaders, which were about eighteen inches to two feet long. They had moss instead of hay with which to show the workings of the new machine. It was amusing to see these men make cocks of hay on the floor of a farmer's house, and then witness the rapidity with which that automatic machine would pick them up and load them on the miniature wagon. Many machines will work on a small scale very prettily, but when made the size required for actual use have some serious defect. So with this hay-loader. When a full-sized loader was put on a wagon, and it grappled the hay, over would go the vehicle, because the weight of hay at the end of the lever was a power great enough to capsize it. The only plan was to throw away the machine, or take weights along, or have men enough to sit on the light side of wagon to counterbalance it until sufficient hay could be loaded into the wagon to keep the wheels on *terra firma*. These men sold township rights at from \$75 to \$200 each, and threw in a brass-model for the farmers to sell by. This was before the day of general crusades by patent-right men. If the farmer sold machines, so much the worse for him. They were all thrown away. Their notes had been sold. No one knew these men. They had been gone months. It is a fact that every town-

ship in the Northern States was sold in this way, excepting those not having a citizen of sufficient responsibility to guarantee them in taking his notes.

GRAIN SEEDING MACHINE. FARMERS APPOINTED  
AGENTS.

Take the case of a well-known Iowa humbug recently operated so extensively. A factory was started in Eastern Iowa for the manufacture of a remarkable "seeder." It was the *ne plus ultra* of farm implements. The man who invented it gazed on his perfected model and sighed that he was ready to embrace grim death. The labor of a life was crowned with success. Before the dodge was played out, thousands of farmers wished that the chap had died even earlier than that.

This scheme involved the employment of the very best of canvassers. They visited the richest men in each township and made a proposition like this: The seeder was a fixed institution in the market. All farmers needed it, and were only waiting for means to procure it with. Now, if the house placed the machine in the hands of middlemen, it necessitated the advancement of the price, and that extra cost came out of the hard-earned money of the poor farmers. A very different and altogether better plan was suggested, viz., the engagement of one farmer in each township to act as a local agent. He could do so without any cost to himself, and, at the same time, make



a neat little profit on all machines sold at the established low price. In town, the machine would sell for \$100; but the house sold it for \$45. The farmer could sell at \$85, the price at which it ought to go, and make an immense amount of money. It was not a very big thing for the farmer, of course. It also helped to break up the pernicious system of middlemen, who were eating the heart out of the farming communities. If Mr. Jones would accept, all that was necessary for him to do was to enter into an agreement to that effect. The agent had regular blanks that could be filled out in an instant. The house was, perhaps, overparticular about these little formalities, but insisted on the signing of a number of documents, which were entirely useless, as the agent really believed. If the agency was acceptable to Mr. Jones, the canvasser really would like to have him make the agreement, because he wanted the best men in the county to represent his house. The managers were men of integrity, and had their dignity to maintain. If poor men were engaged throughout the State, it lowered the general standard of the firm's excellence. The agent showed Mr. Jones all about the machine, and explained to him just what it was necessary to do. All they asked of him was to give them the profits on the first four machines he sold; after that, he could receive from the manufacturers, and have all the profits. The manufactory would agree, in black and white, to ship him all the machines he wanted on a year's credit. No outlay; no risk. The

machines would take up but little room in his barn or under that shed, and would be handy on the ground when the spring opened. The reason this fine offer was made to him was because he ranked as a leading man in the community, and the house wanted him to use the machine and show just what it would do. He would have his fields seeded with them in the spring, and all who passed by would stop and admire the evenness and beauty of the work. The following year he would sell, probably, a score or more of machines without any effort. They would sell themselves on the strength of their operations. They would put down the names of his neighbors who had no seeders, and who would be apt to purchase on such reasonable terms as he could offer them. He could usually think of from fifty to one hundred and fifty who would be sure to buy from him.

The plan looked so feasible that hundreds of farmers bit at it. They became "Agents" by signing a few apparently meaningless documents. The canvasser took his victim to the house, after explaining his scheme, and began to pass papers back and forth for signature. There were a dozen or more, all of no earthly value to any one, except to appoint him the sole agent of that township, and agreements from manufacturers to furnish machines. They set forth in detail just what the canvasser had said, and completely threw the farmer off his guard. At last the canvasser shoved a note under the farmer's nose, with instructions to "sign right there." The farmer frequently signed

without thinking what he was doing; but if one chanced to see that the paper was a note, the agent at once assured him that it was a mere formality and called his attention to the wording of the document. Down in one corner of the note were the words "being the profits on four machines." If the seeders were not sold of course there were no profits which made the note void, but when he did sell them he must pay. This was done so as not to be called back to settle, etc.

The farmer looked upon it as a contract, rather than a note, and almost always was persuaded to sign. If the agent thought he was all right for more of the same medicine, he would talk around for some time, and laud the victim with smooth English as to what a big thing he could make, and induce the farmer to actually believe he would sell enough to make him the wealthiest man in the country. They would walk around and plan where it would be best to build sheds and warehouses to store the machines in. Hours would be spent in that way. If there had not been some more fleecing to do, the agent would have been miles away for a fresh victim. The next drift was to inquire about smart, capable and responsible men for adjoining townships. As the simple granger would mention names, the agent would say, "Does he stand high?" "Have people confidence in him?" "Would he attend to business?" "Is his honesty beyond question," etc. "I see you are acquainted all over, and and I have just thought to myself that you would probably do better in those townships than any other man I



could select. I am struck with you, and would rather see you make it all than to divide it up," and ends in his taking several townships. It takes several days, weeks or months before the credulous farmer gets it through his wool that he has signed a legal note, in an impracticable, visionary scheme. How he has been duped does not break in on him, until some money-shark in town beckons him one side, some day, and innocently tells him he bought his note some time ago, and if he can pay it now he will make a little shave, as he is hard up, etc. "My note? heavens! I ain't sold a machine." But the short of it is, the note has passed into an *innocent* party's hands, and the maker can make no legal defense. He cannot dispute that he agreed to become an agent, and signed various documents as agent, and if he has not sold four machines it is his fault. The maker of the note is a responsible man, is over twenty-one years of age, can read the English language, and is of sound mind. The note has passed into a third party's hands. He is caught, and payment is only a matter of time. A country jury may beat the patent-right man, but the Supreme Court can show no feelings in the matter, and must decide according to law. Few have any idea how extensively this scheme was carried on. Hundreds of men were employed. The right kind of men got immense wages. The most extensive clique of them made Independence, Iowa, their headquarters. The scheme was originated by a man named Ingalls. He took in one year, it is said, \$350,000 of farmers'



notes in this way. One winter, over seventy men in that business centered at Independence. As fast as they would get a little ahead, they would break off on their own hook; but Ingalls kept picking up men and running an immense business. Once in a while some of them would get arrested, but it was hard to prove anything criminal against them, and they would go free. Their victims were generally a considerable distance apart and no concerted action could be brought against them. But enraged humanity soon took the matter in hand and assisted the duped to fight them, and the press of the country exposed the scheme, so that the business of the country not only became unprofitable but dangerous. Its end came in 1870. Ingalls and several of his men were arrested and thrown in jail in St. Charles, Mo., where they lay for several months. The way they were kept there was this: When they furnished a good bail-bond from Independence, the Court would hold that these men were not well enough known, and refused it; there were added good, responsible men in Dubuque, Iowa. After parleying awhile over these, the Court ruled they were too far off. The Dubuque men took some time to add St. Louis men, who were finally accepted. This bail-bond did not include all of them. The rest had to remain in jail until the day of trial. Ingalls beat them in the Courts and prosecuted a number of them for damages; but nothing resulted, as the cases were dropped on account of Ingalls' getting broken up by an army of hungry lawyers, who spouted his farmers'

notes to pay themselves, and, in the end, Ingalls lost everything. As the "seeder" business became too well known to carry it on any further, these fellows took up other articles, working on the same plan.

#### PATENT GATES.

Patent gates had a big run—not so much the sale of the gate, but the right to make a certain kind. Five dollars would pay for the right to make as many of them as the farmer wished to use on his farm.

#### FRAUDULENT NOTES.

We present below a *fac-simile* of a contract made by swindlers with farmers, for the sale of various kinds of agricultural machinery. The fraud has been perpetrated on a great number of worthy people, who certainly ought to have known better than to attach their name to any document of such character. A man whom we will call A. Brown, calls upon a farmer, named John Smith. Brown introduces himself as the general agent of a first-class seeding machine. He talks Smith into agreeing to act as a subagent for his section of the country, under the impression that he will reap a rich financial harvest from the sale of the machine. Brown says he only asks \$10 for establishing the agency, the same to be paid only after he (Smith) has sold \$275 worth of the seeders. Smith feels that this is a splendid opportunity, and he signs the "contract," which is as follows :

## PATENT RIGHTS.

## [SWINDLING NOTE.]

*Terre Haute, Ind., Feb. 15th, 1871.*

*One year after date I promise to pay A. Brown or . bearer, ten dollars, when I sell by order Two Hundred and Seventy-five Dollars . worth of Seeding Machines for value received at ten per cent per annum, . said ten dollars, when due is payable at Terre Haute, Ind.      John Smith, . Agent for A. Brown.*

*Witness : John Doe.*

This is apparently innocent enough. A contract simply to pay \$10 *when* machines to a certain value have been sold. Surely there is no great risk in an arrangement of that kind.

Now, this contract is nothing less than a note of hand that binds the maker to pay \$275 with 10 per cent interest on the order of A. Brown, one year from date. That is what it is; and when Smith signed it he placed himself under obligation to pay that amount. The contract is so worded that when cut in two where dots are, divests it of the nature of a contract and makes it a pure note of hand. Try the experiment. Place a sheet of paper over the right-hand end, where dots are, and then see if you could consent to sign such a contract were some oily-tongued fellow to present one to you.

These notes are discounted at banks on liberal margins, and collections made by bankers when the limitation expires. That will be the first the unsuspecting farmer knows of what he has done. But it is too late for him to help himself.

#### BASS-WOOD WAGONS.

One set went to manufacturing the cheapest wagons imaginable. They were made of bass-wood, with no ironing worth mentioning, and painted up nicely so as to be striking. Their plan was to make a man an agent, *leave a sample* wagon with him to use, take the profits on the first half-dozen sold, secure a note and travel on. They were a fancy, double-seated, light





ENRAGED CITIZENS AFTER A PATENT RIGHT SWINDLER.

wagon, for two horses. The first time they got wet the trouble commenced. No man was ever known to send for the second one.

#### WIND-WHISTLE.

From the East, we hear of the newest swindle that has been practiced upon the farmers. As it will, of course, find its way to other sections of the country, we propose to give our readers the benefit of its description, that they may know it, should it make its appearance in their locality. It is reported to us that in Central New York a number of agents have made their appearance, offering for sale what is called a wind-whistle. This instrument is designed to be used in place of the customary bell which is employed for the purpose of calling farm hands to meals. The whistle is applied to the highest point on the house, and has a cord attached to a valve. All that is necessary is to pull the cord, and the wind, passing through a hole, acts upon the whistle and produces a loud noise. Very clever, indeed, and so much better than an old-fashioned bell! The agents managed to "whistle" a pretty big section of country, and appointed a number of good old farmers agents to push the sales, when suddenly a storm gathered and broke. The farmers who had purchased the whistle, and had been thoroughly satisfied, were somewhat surprised when it dawned upon them that the supply of wind couldn't be guaranteed to hold out on all occasions. So, when they pulled the string on a calm day, and didn't pro-

duce any noise in the whistle, it came to them very forcibly that they had been swindled once more. A very neat thing is a wind-whistle. It costs only \$25! Just picture a farm hand down in the field, hungry enough to eat a dog, waiting for the welcome whistle, waiting, waiting, a dead calm all about, dinner ready at the house, and the women folks frantically pulling the string of the dumb machine and getting no response. A wind-whistle is a charming thing! So much better than a good old-fashioned bell or horn that one can always bet on for ringing or waking the echoes of the distant hillsides.

Whenever a wind-whistle agent calls upon you, tell him emphatically that you have learned the price of all kinds of whistles.

#### BARB-WIRE FENCE

has been carried on in the same way. They contract in this to deliver so many feet of wire. Note to be given on delivery of the goods. No man could think of measuring the wire, on account of its "pricking propensity," and would take the say-so of agents as to the number of feet. It always falls short in measurement and quality. Another plan is to exhibit a reel of wire to the farmer as a sample, and containing a certain number of pounds. The farmer buys a reel of it, supposing he is getting the same amount as is shown him. When he receives the goods and bill, which latter another agent collects, the victim ascertains that he has had a reel about ten times larger



than the sample, forced upon him. He has to pay for the extra amount, however. He may not want so much wire, but he has purchased it in this foolish, blind method of dealing.

#### AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY "AGENCIES."

A story comes up from Ohio of a couple of glib-tongued chaps who called upon a farmer and at once struck up a friendship. It was a pity, they said, that he should work so hard and reap so small profit. They had a machine of which they would give him the agency, and in selling it he could make handsome profits. After considerable talk they persuaded the farmer to put his name to a contract by which he thought he simply agreed to act as the agent of the proprietors of the machine. A few weeks later, the farmer ascertained that there was a large quantity of machinery awaiting him at the railroad depot, and at the same time he received notice from a bank near by that his note for a certain amount was due! In one case, in Butler Co., Ohio, a farmer one day found that he had signed an order for "*twenty* improved corn-shellers." He supposed that he had simply agreed to act as the agent of the manufacturers of the machine, and at the same time to receive one corn-sheller free!

Farmers should be careful what they sign. The swindlers in this instance gave their corn-sheller manufactory a name very much like that of an actually existing firm. It was slightly different. The farmer



supposed he was dealing with a responsible house. This reputable firm knew nothing of the transaction of the two frauds.

SUING FARMERS WHO HAVE USED PATENTED ARTICLES  
WITHOUT PAYING ROYALTY.

Some shrewd fellows discovered that farmers were pretty generally using certain articles. These agents would hunt up the patentee and get permission to scare all the money out of them they could and divide the proceeds with the patentees. A gate that operated by being pushed back half its length until it balanced, and then was swung around, was used very extensively on account of its simplicity and cheapness. Also, a clevis attached to a plow when three horses were used; and articles of a similar nature. The plan was to show the "infringer" a copy of the patent, read him extracts from the patent laws, explain the nature of the penalty, and threaten to take him to a distant city to appear before the United States Court for disobeying a national law, etc. A majority of cases were settled on some terms—generally \$5. Those who did not settle were not molested.



## FRUIT-TREE SWINDLES.

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Every farmer, almost, can testify that one of the most successful and barefaced swindles ever perpetrated on the rural districts is that of selling worthless fruit-trees. It is perfectly natural that the owner and tiller of a piece of land should feel a commendable pride in maintaining a fine orchard, and it is singular that with experience in everything pertaining to farm management some farmers get the idea into their heads that the cultivation of fruit is a thing requiring little or no special preparation or study. If a tree is put into the ground and left there a few years the planter thinks it ought to produce a thrifty yield of just such fruit as the label it bears indicates. He is apt to find out how mistaken has been his confidence in the word of some peripatetic agent. There is no limit to the chance for fraud, and it is increased by the willingness of farmers to accept as Gospel truth whatever may be told by an unknown and unreliable tree-vender.

The canvasser puts in his appearance and represents himself as an agent of some well-advertised house. He warrants the stock he has to dispose of to

grow and bear fruit in a very short time. He knows, and so expresses himself, that farmers have been frequently deceived by unscrupulous men and that the climate is not adapted to the propagation of all varieties of fruit; but he proposes, vauntingly, to secure patronage by honest dealing and offering trees specially adapted to meet the requirements of the peculiarities of the section he may be operating in. By these loud and specious protestations he soon secures a favorable hearing, and it is not long before he sells to the very man who was outrageously swindled by a similar dodge, a bill of from \$25 to \$200 worth of scions or trees. Having worked his territory exhaustively and secured every order he possibly can, the agent begins to deliver his wares, which prove to be nothing but common cuttings or the cheapest kind of trees purchased wherever he can get them at the lowest figures. Of course the fraud cannot be detected until sufficient time has elapsed to develop the nature of the trees, and long before that time arrives the agent is in some other business, or the Lord only knows where. He can't be reached, and the purchaser of the worthless trees must twirl his fingers and rest content with simply pondering over the general cursedness of mankind. The trees were paid for when delivered; they are good for nothing, as time proves, and the victim is out his money and has no redress. The pecuniary loss is not the most serious one. The farmer has wasted several years endeavoring to cultivate an orchard that is simply worthless.

Sometimes the introduction of a new and wonderfully prolific fruit is resorted to as the means of swindling farmers. Such an instance recently came under the notice of the writer. We hear of others almost every day. The case to which we refer was where an agent traveled through the West selling an astonishing fruit-tree called the Rocky Mountain Cluster Apple. It met with a favorable reception almost everywhere. Certain farmers set out scores of these trees, which were warranted to live and bear fruit in three years. They did live and bore fruit, just as promised, but by that time the swindled purchasers ascertained that the marvelous trees were nothing more than the common Mountain Ash.

Some of the agents carry with them specimens of the alleged product of their favorite trees. These fruits are first selected with great care and are then placed in small boxes or cases having magnifying glass tops through which the fruit looks larger and nicer than it really is. Of course the trees sold by means of such exhibits are not of the variety represented, and prove a burden to a man instead of a blessing or profit.

Whether it be the oily-tongued fellow with florid prints of impossible fruits faithfully depicted between richly-bound lids, or the more humble chap who carries cheap pictures in a portfolio, or the scamp with his jars of preserved specimens—whatever the means resorted to by the traveling fruit and ornamental tree peddler, the purchaser is almost sure to be swindled.



They carefully steer clear of such families as are well supplied with agricultural and other journals and books. They find few sales among members of the horticultural societies.

Another class with whom these peddlers find favor is the feminine portion of the household in families where the head of the house begrudges money spent for anything that does not pertain to the field; where orchards and gardens are never found. The reason is that women have an innate love for the beautiful, appreciate the value of fruit, and, out of their money saved from the sale of butter and eggs—beguiled by these smart-spoken fellows—willingly pay from their hard-earned store the money asked by these swindlers for trees, supposing they will bear fruit according to the pictures shown. The peddler, with his book well stored with orders—and, when possible, the signatures of those who order attached—generally goes to the nearest nursery where “cull stock” may be found, and orders the cheapest he can buy, corresponding to the several amounts—not of varieties, but of species—in his book. These are sorted into corresponding lots to suit the orders, labeled with the names as given, shipped and delivered to the several buyers. The money is paid, and the result is, that when the trees grow up (if, indeed, they grow at all), a lot of worthless sorts are found in the place of those ordered. Perhaps the buyer learns a lesson. All do not.

A certain class, whose cupidity and ignorance combined are taken advantage of to make them believe

that they are getting some wonderful new thing, as, for instance, a blue rose at about one quarter its real value, or some new fruit just invented, "bite" again and again; just as the novice at gambling returns again and again to the faro-table or the sweat-cloth only to be again and again cheated.

These tree agents know very well when they are pursuing their nefarious calling that a majority, perhaps, of those to whom they sell will neglect the trees and not give them the cultivation and attention they demand, and consequently they look upon the whole business in the light that it is just as well to give the farmer poor trees as good ones. If they furnished good trees, they might be allowed to perish. So the "brush" is bought at the cheapest price, sold at exorbitant figures, and the agent leaves the country and lets the farmer growl.

A farmer must not believe, because a man comes to him with a book full of fancy colored plates that that individual is a *bona-fide* tree agent, representing some reputable nursery firm. He should be compelled to show other authority than the book. These colored books are sold by publishing houses to anybody who will buy them, and it is an easy matter for irresponsible persons to get hold of them, and by these means impose upon a too credulous public.

Fruit-growing is one of the most difficult branches of farming, and cannot be successfully engaged in by every man. But an orchard is a necessity on a well-regulated farm, and the desire to have one is both

natural and reasonable. To compass the end farmers should invest their money only in such trees or vines as are known to be good, and purchase them of local fruit-growers who have given care and intelligent thought to the subject. Strangers should be received with caution when they approach a man to sell him goods of any kind, but especially so when they offer wares that cannot be judged by any possible means under three or four years.

Is there no other remedy? Yes. What is it? Education. Those who do not fear contamination from the reading of correct agricultural literature as found in the better class of agricultural journals and books, seldom, if ever, invest in these tree-peddlers' wares. They are posted, and can discriminate pretty well between the swindler and an authorized agent of a reputable nursery firm. They are also well aware, because they have it constantly brought to their notice, of the varieties of fruits natural to the climate. In fact, they know pretty well what they want, and, dealing with responsible men, get it.

#### HOW TO BUY FRUIT-TREES.

Agents get 50 per cent commissions from nurseries. If they buy wherever they can make the best bargain, they make nearly 100 per cent. If you wish trees, get the address of some established nursery as near you as possible, but always purchase in the same latitude and in the same climate. Say you want lowest

figures. Make them throw off canvassers' commissions. Get their terms and then pay only a part of the price, until you know that the trees were sent to you in good shape. In this way you cannot get swindled, and you can set out an orchard or any fruit, flowers or vines for very little money.

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## THE CLOTH SWINDLE.

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Few of the swindles which are almost daily practiced upon the farming communities of America are carried out more successfully than is that which is commonly known as the cloth fraud. There is scarcely a township in any State of the Union where it has not been carried on, and hundreds, yes, we may safely say, thousands, of those who flatter themselves that they are too worldly wise to be taken in by any new-fangled device for raking in the coveted dollar, have it to say that they were most completely fooled by the cheerful cloth agent, and that their notes of hand, in the possession of neighboring bankers or private money-lenders, are the overwhelming evidence of their childish simplicity and neglect to keep pace with the current of events. The cloth swindle is nothing new. It has found its way into newspapers, and the parties upon whom the fraud is practiced



have repeatedly been warned against the rascals; but all this has not resulted in curing the evil. The cloth agent is still about "seeking whom he may devour," and we are ashamed to say that he thrives amazingly on the ignorance of his fellow-men.

We must acknowledge at the outset that the cloth agent is a fraud, a fraud of the very worst description. The very first move he makes; when he strikes a section that is to be "worked," is to get acquainted with some banker or loan agent in the neighborhood, and from him ascertain who are the responsible farmers whose notes will be negotiable and who will be apt to buy goods of him. He is directed by the banker to this and that party, whose paper he will take, giving \$100 for any \$150 note that may be presented to him.

Having secured the co-operation of the banker, the cloth agent makes the acquaintance of some reputable man of the neighborhood, in whom the farmers have confidence, for the purpose of securing introductions to the farming community. This person is always assured of a certain percentage of the profits. In other words, he is paid, and well paid, by the agent for performing this piece of what we may well term very dirty work. Now bear this fact in mind, reader. Whenever your friend, John Thompson, drives up to your house with a cloth agent, and desires to make you acquainted with him, and assures you that the agent has some very good wares to sell—whenever he does this, John Thompson has been bought up, and is

to put into his own pocket a portion of the money which the agent is to swindle out of you.

When the pair have made their appearance at a farmhouse, and the agent, by persuasive words and shrewd maneuvering, has gained access, the family is informed that he has a large quantity of dry goods



THE CLOTH PEDDLER.

*Peddler*—Yes, madam! They burst, and we are sent out among the honest farmers to sell the goods for less than it cost to make them. What you would pay \$350 for in your stores, I let you have for \$150, and give you a year to pay for them. I bring your friend Mr. Jones along with me, so that you can take his word, because I am a stranger. It's no difference to him, you know.

which must be disposed of at ruinously low prices. He represents the well-known firm of So-and-So (some leading dry goods house of one of the large cities). That firm for some reason has been obliged to economize, and is on the verge of bankruptcy, in fact. It

was caught with an enormous stock of goods on hand, and has resorted to this popular plan of disposing of them. There were in the concern perhaps three hundred salesmen, and these gentlemen have been sent out with goods, and instructed to dispose of them at the very bottom prices! He (the agent) is one of these salesmen; he has some goods he knows will please the farmer's family. This is the manner in which he paves the way to a sale.

With this he goes to his buggy, which is filled with dry goods, and brings in a large bundle, being assisted, of course, by the farmer's acquaintance, Mr. Thompson, whose mere acquiescence in what the agent has to offer goes farther than anything else in influencing the head of the household to give the stranger a favorable hearing.

Now comes the nice part of the agent's work. Calicoes are displayed and offered for one-half less than they can be purchased for at any store. Gingham, delaines, muslins, sheetings, are thrown in at the same great sacrifice. The wife herself acknowledges that she cannot begin to purchase the goods for the figures the stranger offers them for. After the light goods the swindler produces a piece of broadcloth. This he flaunts in the eyes of the farmer, assures him that it is the finest article to be had for the money, and that his house made a special importation of several thousand yards. On this cloth he puts a certain figure, which eventually proves to be about three times more than it is worth. Convinced that they have secured



the first goods at a sacrifice (and they *are* sold for less than market price), the farmer and his folks are disposed to purchase of the heavier articles, of which they know little, and of course are under the impression that they are securing at the same great discount on actual cost.

Having, during the conversation, informed the farmer that he has been instructed by the house to sell nothing less than a \$150 package of goods to any individual, he further conveys the intelligence at this point that payment need not be made under twelve months. He will take the farmer's note and wait on him a year.

So it is that the victim of the sale becomes far more interested than he has hitherto been, and when, a few moments later, the shrewd agent whips out a high-colored shawl, calculated to take the female eye, the farmer is at last nearly convinced that it will be to his advantage to secure a lot of these goods. The women-folks "second the motion," and insist upon it that the goods shall not go back with the agent. Seeing that the farmer himself wavers, and is not wholly won, the agent throws in another piece of light cloth, and perhaps a package of handkerchiefs or other small article, and these are the straws with which to break the bargain's back.

This is too much, and the farmer consents. He signs the note, receives the goods, the agent drives off with the mutual friend, Mr. Thompson, and the family is left to do what it pleases with the dry goods.



It isn't long before the farmer discovers that the broadcloth is shoddy, the worst kind of shoddy. It is cloth pressed, not woven, and composed of the refuse of a woolen-mill, held together by horse-hairs.

He finds that the "India" shawl, which he supposed was a bargain, is a damaged article, inferior in quality, no India characteristics about it, and was sold to him for about ten times its value.

He finds that his note is in the hands of his city or village banker, or that old Jones, the skinflint, has it. And he must pay it.

He learns that the agent sold it to the banker or to Jones the very day he sold the farmer the goods, and if he is sharp in inquiry, he will ascertain that the agent was so anxious to get rid of the note that he let it go for \$100.

He will find that he is no exception, but that every person in his neighborhood who has bought these goods has been dealt with in the same manner.

And, too, he will find that the firm is a myth. The reputable house whose name the swindler gave never resorts to such ends in selling goods.

#### HOW TO TREAT THEM.

Farmers ought to bear in mind this fact, that these agents who call to sell them goods of the description spoken of in the foregoing paragraphs have to pay just as much for their white goods, which are really good, as does the village merchant. They cannot buy them in the markets of the world for one cent a yard

less, and yet they come to you and sell for one-half the common price. Then, also, the agent is at big expense in traveling over the country, paying livery and hotel bills, and giving Mr. Thompson, who goes about with him, a handsome fee for his part of the work. All these things aggregate a very large sum, and, to cover the heavy expense to which he is constantly put, the agent must make an enormous profit somewhere. And where does it come in? The heavy goods are nothing but shoddy. These are manufactured by American or European houses which make nothing else, and are composed of the odds and ends of cloth, horse-hair, bits of sticks, and general rubbish of all descriptions. The farmer finds this out, perhaps, when the goods are made up and will not hold the threads, or when it rains and the cloth soaks apart like a piece of paper.

There are instances where the goods are a damaged lot, picked up here and there about the country, or goods out of style, which cannot be sold in the cities to anybody, and which are disposed of in job lots at a considerable discount on their cost, simply because the wholesale merchant does not want them longer on his hands. When the agent sells them to you, he charges about double the original retail price, and you pay what he asks under the impression that because he has offered you some few things cheap, the whole lot is a corresponding bargain.

The long and short of this transaction is this: The agent buys these goods for \$75. He sells them to a

farmer for \$150. He sells the note for \$100 (because, if he himself holds it, he knows the farmer will never pay it after discovering how utterly valueless the bulk of the goods are). He gives the man who takes him around \$3 for each bill of goods sold. Taking out his own expenses on every bill of goods sold, \$2, this leaves him a profit of \$20 on each bill sold. These men sell from one to a dozen lots of goods per day.

When the farmer discovers the nature of the goods purchased, he makes up his mind that he will not pay the note. Before it is due, he is innocently informed by the banker in whose hands it is that he holds the note for dry goods which the farmer bought. The banker or curbstone broker will represent that he supposed it was all right, and bought the note at very small shave, when in fact he knew all about the nature of the transaction before he bought the note, and he was a party to the swindle just as much as was the salesman.

The long and short of it all is that you have been robbed in the house of your friends. The banker is the chief thief, who aided in the swindle, making the most money out of it by shaving the note which he knew was obtained under false pretenses. The "friend" made a good thing by acting the part of stool-pigeon, and, while pretending to be your friend, has put his hand into your pocket and helped himself. The agent has got away with a nice bit of "swag," as the phrase goes, and you alone are left to lament that you have allowed the wool to be again pulled over your eyes.

## “SMUGGLED” CLOTH.

There's another kind of cloth swindle that has caught a good many farmers. A set of chaps wearing blue-flannel shirts and big trousers offer a bundle of cloth and fancy goods which they mysteriously hint has been smuggled from Canada. They don't want money right away, and will take a note. This and the extremely low price of the goods effects a sale. The cloth is the flimsiest kind of shoddy. The note is a good one, however.

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## PATENT MEDICINES.

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One of the first and most important duties of life is to take care of the health. This fact is so well known that it would appear to be a piece of supererogation on our part to dwell at any length on the necessity of doing what nature so distinctly teaches us. What we desire is, to impress upon the minds of our readers the importance of giving themselves proper treatment, should they be so unfortunate as to fall victims to this or that disease, and not jeopardize their existence by seeking the advice of quacks or partaking of the nostrums which flood the market and are “guaranteed” to be specifics for every ill that flesh is heir to. With Shakespeare we can heartily exclaim, “Lord, how the world is giving to lying,” and the bold truth of the



sweeping assertion stands out in everything which originates with these men, who turn a "nimble sixpence" into an "accelerated" half-dollar, and by their wits gain a competence at the expense of the gullible and too reliant world.

It is not the intention of this little work to enter at this point upon a lengthy dissertation on good health and the means of preserving the same against the insidious attack of disease, which is ever on the alert for the unfortunate and the injudicious; we leave that to professional physicians who have made the subject the study of a life-time. What we do intend to present to the consideration of the public is the fact that it is constantly beset by a class who, living by their wits, and without the first elements of special education, are known under the generic term of quacks. There be quacks in every walk of life, in every profession, in every branch of business, bold and unscrupulous men who would not hesitate at any act that would promise them financial gain. Take up the newspapers of the day if you want to substantiate the truth of this assertion. Read the columns of crime, which stand out in bold yet horrible relief. It is there that you will find scores of instances wherein the professional quack has played his part and been apprehended. These are but as a drop in the bucket in comparison with the actual cases existing, and which never come to light. There can be no doubt, judging from the many cases we all are cognizant of, that hundreds, yes thousands, of people yearly die through lack of proper medical

treatment, or by being experimented on by these non-professionals who lay claim to authority to practice a profession one of the most important in the entire category.

#### RUNNING AFTER "STRANGE GODS."

The trouble is, people are, for some reason it is hard to explain, inclined to run after "strange gods," and if they find a "doctor" who says he can cure them in a week, when their family physician would require six months, the sick man, ten to one, will throw overboard the man of skill and education and begin taking the nostrums of the stranger, and at the same time, in all probability, commence the rapid descent to the grave. If you have a cold which settles into a cough, you hasten to a drug store and invest a dollar or two in a bottle of some patent expectorant; if bilious, swallow a bottle of "liver regulator," under the impression that you will be cured in a few days; if suffering from catarrh, fill the nasal cavities and throat with worthless and dangerous snuffs; and so on through the fairly endless list of physical complications, each one of which is, by the shrewdness of man, provided with its specific. Drop into a drug store and look at the shelves. They are lined with bottles, each bearing the attractive legend of "sure cure for everything under the heavens," or above them, for that matter. You will find that the entire range of disease has been covered by shrewd inventors, and that Dr. This, whose "life was nearly gone," hit upon a combination of

herbs, and thus prolonged his existence ; that Dr. That, by “merest accident,” discovered that one of the simplest remedies of the pharmacopœia was a certain cure for consumption, bronchitis, etc. ; that Dr. The Other had felt it his duty to give suffering humanity the benefit of his researches, and had provided a mixture for every internal disarrangement ; and so without end. But they all were prompted in their “humanitarianism” by the expectation of reaping a fortune, nothing else.

It is not that people are imposed upon by so-called “doctors,” who have no education, and who, from shoveling coal, making gardens, or following other menial labor have suddenly taken up the practice of medicine, without the slightest elementary instruction ; it is not that these quacks exist in almost every town, and particularly in the large cities, and that unsuspecting citizens are being taken in by them almost every day ; it is not altogether on this account that we write these lines, but rather to show up, in few words, some of the many villainous compounds which are constantly on sale, and which are being swallowed by thousands of people to the everlasting detriment of their bodies. These mixtures are of all grades, and while some may be conceded to be perfectly harmless as to their components, and for this reason are frauds, in that large sums of money are charged for them, others are known to be positively dangerous, and made up of most deleterious articles. What do you think, for instance, of a mixture for



coughs and colds, alleged in the flaming advertisements of the proprietor, or "doctor," to be composed of every healing herb known, and actually made up only of the dirtiest kind of molasses and a small quantity of tar, with a slight infusion of flavoring to take off the edge? And then, for what costs perhaps two cents, and is dear at that price, the victim must plank down a dollar or a dollar and a half, and fill his stomach with a fraud of a preparation that wouldn't cure a cold in a sick dog. And yet this thing is practiced every day. The drug stores are filled with these so-called medicines.

#### COMPOUNDERS OF PATENT MEDICINES.

What would you think of a man who originally peddled apples and peanuts in his native town and made a poor living at that, suddenly turning his attention to the manufacture of a noted pectoral, and thereby amassing a fabulous fortune? Or a red-headed Irish gardener, in an Eastern city, preparing "medicines" which have brought him a round million? These are the men who have made their names known in every household in the land by judicious advertising, and have led people to believe that the nostrums they own are cure-alls for every disease under the sun. The one great point in the success of these mixtures is the manner in which they are placed upon the market. A certain "doctor" for instance, conceives the idea of preparing a "medicine" for the cure of blood diseases. He knows very well that mankind



largely suffers from such complaints, and he is careful to announce that it is a certain specific for every known characteristic of blood disorder. These are set forth on the label or in the advertisement, and so, when a victim sees it, and notices that his peculiar disease is set forth, he at once resolves to purchase a bottle; for such and such a thing ails him, and isn't it stated that this potion will eradicate his complaint?

Whenever a new disease comes up, the labels are changed and the new complaint inserted so as to extend the sale of the decoction. It is safe to say that the medicine will cure one as well as the other.

#### BILIOUS PREPARATIONS.

Then there are bilious preparations, whose remedial powers are simply marvelous. "Age does not impair them"; their "virtues are preserved in every climate"; they "operate without disturbance to the constitution"; in fact, they are sure cure! There are numberless "bitters," for sinking spells, disordered stomachs, sick headache, kidney complaints" etc. They make women strong, serve as appetizers, restore sobriety, make the skin fair, and do other wonderful things, for which suffering humanity will gladly pay, and thus put money into the pockets of the designing manufacturers. Let us look at some of these specifics a moment.

Take pills for instance, the so-called purgative blood-pills, made in New York, Cincinnati, Baltimore, Chicago and other cities. The ingredients of one will

cover nearly all. The common liver-pill is composed of aloes, colocynth and podophyllin. While they are advertised as blood-purifiers, they are in fact, powerful drastic purgatives, and leave the bowels in such a deplorable condition that eight out of twelve cases where taken result in piles. This fact has been substantiated by competent examination and investigation.

Then there are compound purgative pills, called blood-purifiers or liver-purifiers. They are made of the same materials as the foregoing pills. Now everybody knows that an overflow of bile into the stomach, causing bilious disorder, is removed by emetic without leaving any ill effects. Just think of taking these villainous compounds into the system, which bring on most serious disorders and do not relieve the complaint for which taken.

#### COUGH MIXTURES.

There are numberless cough preparations on the market, advertised in nearly every paper you may pick up. They are known under the general term of wild-cherry compounds. Innocent people buy and take them, believing they are swallowing wild cherry, which, of itself, has some virtues. These cough mixtures are made of the essential oil of bitter almonds, which is a deadly poison; prussic acid, another poison; simple sirup, and opium and tartar emetic. There isn't a particle of wild cherry in them; nothing but poisons, so mixed as to be palatable. These are sold



"MOTHER PARSONS" MANUFACTURING HER SOOTHING SYRUP.

(ADVERTISEMENT.)

## THE GREAT DISCOVERY OF THE AGE.

### MOTHER PARSONS' SOOTHING SYRUP.

#### A SURE REMEDY FOR OUR LITTLE CRYING DARLINGS.

Mrs. Parsons, the mother of nineteen children, while traveling in South America for her health, through having such a love for those little innocents God has sent us, discovered that the babies of one of those semi-barbarous tribes were blessed with perfect health, and were always either sleeping soundly or playing quietly. She never heard a cry from one of them. She found that the secret was known only to three native physicians. After months of persuasion she secured it by paying a large sum of money. Mrs. Parsons being very wealthy, did not care for the money she might make from gaining this secret. Her only thoughts were the great good she could do the whole human family.

It is a perfectly harmless herb, and only grows in that country. So extensive has Mrs. Parsons' business become in preparing this delightful syrup, that she employs hundreds of men and women in her manufactory, and imports her herbs by the ship-load. It is not only as harmless as the mother's milk, but is a tonic that makes the weak strong and the puny fleshy. A few drops will insure hours of sleep to our dear little, suffering ones, and give mothers their needed rest.

Manufactured only by

MRS. BETSEY JANE PARSONS,  
913, 915 and 917 Walnut St., Philadelphia.

For sale by all respectable Druggists. Price only \$1.00 per bottle.



for \$2 a bottle. Isn't it a pretty costly drug for a simple cough?

There are numerous "pulmonic sirups," under various proprietary names. These are generally composed of the same ingredients as are the cough medicines—some of them being only simple syrup, tartar emetic and a little flavoring oil, the prussic acid and oil of almonds being left out so as to readily distinguish them from cherry pectorals. These pulmonic sirups are put up in eight-ounce bottles, and sold for \$1. They cost about 25 cents.

#### CONSUMPTION CURES.

Consumption-cures also have a great run. People are foolish enough to believe that a bottle of this or that preparation will heal their lungs and do what nothing else under heaven will. Consumption-cures under whatever name they may go are composed principally of cod-liver oil, and a mucilage of gum arabic. Nothing more. They are put up in small bottles, which sell for \$1, costing only 10 cents.

#### BLOOD-PURIFIERS.

Under the head of sarsaparillas may be enumerated the thousand-and-one so-called blood-purifiers and eradicators of mercurial diseases which flood the market. These are made, as a general thing, simply from common or table molasses, flavored with oil of wintergreen, and contain a few of the ordinary blood



extracts. There's nothing they will not cure, if we accept the statements of the proprietors, and yet they contain not the slightest trace of sarsaparilla. We might cite an instance where a certain manufacturer of sarsaparillas made it so weak and vile that in a short time it began to ferment and break on the druggists' shelves. The manufacturer was compelled to call in the entire lot. And what did he do? Simply added a little alcohol so as to prevent further fermentation, and then placed it on the market again, with new labels cautioning the public not to buy the first made, should any be offered, as it "was not genuine." This sarsaparilla was a watery decoction of yellowdock and burdock, sweetened with molasses and flavored with the essential oil of wintergreen; no sarsaparilla in it.

#### HAIR "TONICS."

There are thousands of people who have been ruined for life through using some one of the hair tonics which are warranted to restore hair to its original color, or make it grow on bald heads. People do not stop to consider how wild such assertions may be, but having gray hair, or none at all, hope to restore it in all its pristine beauty by resorting to some of these advertised lotions. How sad the experience of many. These tonics are made up of oil of almonds and spirits of ammonia, which every housewife knows is a good liniment for sprains, bruises, etc. It is an excellent irritant, and if the individual who

applies it to his head is so fortunate as to have any hair when he puts it on, he can rest assured that it will all go as soon as the lotion begins to work on his epidermis. One of the most common hair tonics is known as Twiggs' Hair Wash. It is a villainous compound, made up of white sulphur (commonly called lac sulphur), sugar of lead and rose-water. There are people to-day who can affirm that they are suffering from lead-poisoning and paralysis of the arms and limbs from using this wash.

#### COSMETICS AND FACE WASHES.

Dr. Carbally, an eminent physician and chemist, testifies that the cosmetics which the fashionable belles of the present day are so fond of using, and deem so indispensable to their beauty, are the most deadly enemies to the vital system. Paralysis, that fatal and frightful form of bodily infirmity, is said to be the result of the continual use of the paints or washes used for enameling or otherwise artificially whitening the skin.

Chief among these fearful auxiliaries of the toilet, is that white horror, a well-known "Bloom of Youth," which is so extensively used by the ladies of society, married and single, for "making-up" their complexions. The salts of lead contained in this preparation, which is the means of producing that pearly-white, polished appearance of the skin, on applying it, is the active agent of paralysis, and any female who

uses it, or any other lotion or powder containing these salts, is tampering with her life.

Dr. Carbally further tells us, seriously, that the peculiar droop of the hands, sarcastically called the "kangaroo style," and which was supposed by the community to be a freak of fashion, really and truly had its origin in a partial paralysis of the extensor muscle of the fore-arm, produced by the use of those outward poisons. Some fashionable belle, no doubt, had suffered in this terrible way for her folly, and all the fashionable geese of her acquaintance followed suit by crooking their wrists and drooping their hands, like so many hens with their wings broken.

We learn also that all powders, paint and liquids which impart a polished, scintillating whiteness to the skin, contain metallic poisons, and are extremely perilous. The more beautiful the more dangerous.

#### CATARRH SNUFFS.

Thousands of persons in this country are afflicted with catarrh. Finding that it troubles them greatly, they resort to some of the well-advertised "medicines" which are guaranteed to "cure catarrh of ten years' duration," "defective eye-sight," "inflamed and watery eyes," "ringing noises in the head," "loss of sense of taste and smell," and a long list of complications arising from this derangement of the nasal cavities. Catarrh-cures are, principally, snuffs, inhalers and douches. The former are composed, in the main, of powdered sugar, colored with blood-root,

and with a few drops of spirits of camphor added. They are all powerful irritants, producing inflammation of the parts where applied, and this has the effect to increase rather than diminish the disease. Then there are catarrh solutions put up in pint bottles, containing sixteen ounces of water, in which is put a pinch of borax and common salt. These are sold for \$1. Everybody knows that common salt is a good remedy; but why pay such an exorbitant price for it when it may be had for nothing at home? With this solution goes a *douche* for throwing the water into the head. For this you will be charged \$3, a net profit of \$2.50 to the quack. You may save this money by simply inhaling salt water from the palm of the hand.

The reader may readily perceive how he is swindled by these quacks.

#### THE KILLING OF YOUNG MEN.

We want to touch for a moment on another phase of this question; one which is of most vital importance—especially to the youth of the land. Hundreds of young men, particularly, are brought to the verge of the grave every year through indiscretions. Finding themselves, at last, in the jaws of hell, and being afraid to make it known to their folks or the family physician, they resort to the quack advertisers of the great cities, who announce that their consultations are confidential, and cure certain. The disease, neglected at the outset, may have become chronic. They go to one of these quacks, who very gravely tells the patient



that the case is one of the worst ever known ; but he can be cured after a somewhat protracted treatment. It will be necessary to pay a fee of \$50. Of course the victim willingly pays the amount, takes a prescription and goes off to only grow worse as the "treatment" proceeds. The preparations of these "doctors" are generally put up by themselves ; for, knowing so little of medicine, they would not dare to send a prescription to a drug store. Strong, irritating injections are given, and powerful mercurial preparations, known in medical parlance as proto-iodides of mercury. Salivation sets in, the system is depleted, and, in the course of fifteen or twenty days, the disease, combined with the powerful and destructive "remedies," has nearly destroyed the vital organs of the patient. The most outrageous treatment is practiced by these men. They feel sure that the patients will not say anything to expose them ; for in so doing they would expose themselves ; and so they continue the practice of robbing the young and ruining their lives. For, even should a patient survive to be operated upon by a regular physician, ten to one the matter would have gone so far that salvation would be impossible.

No reputable physician, regularly educated, would lower himself to follow up these "special cases." The men who are in them are uneducated, and have no authority to practice. Shun them as you would a viper. If you are unfortunate, young man, go to your home physician, tell him all and trust to him to bring you up once more.

Of late years, mothers who are nervous and do not like to hear the baby cry, have been in the habit of giving the youngster a "dosing" of fashionable soothing sirup. Do you know, you mother who do this, that you are inviting cerebral weakness? That you are paving the road to mental inactivity? That your child, simply by this, may never have the right use of its faculties? It is a fact, nevertheless. These "soothers" are composed of poppy sirups and morphia; nothing less. The latter is a powerful anodyne. It gives unnatural rest to children; constipates the bowels, and is particularly deleterious when the infant is teething. You might just as well knock the child in the head with a club when you desire it to be quiet. The effect of either treatment—club or sirup—is about the same.

We cannot dismiss the subject without once more impressing upon our readers the importance of avoiding everything that has the semblance of patent medicines. There are able and educated men in every community, whose reputations are staked upon their skill in the treatment of bodily ailments. These are the persons to whom to go to seek relief. If they cannot aid you, you may rest assured that villainous preparations, made up of the most injurious drugs, will not help you on the road to health, but will rather hasten your demise. How foolish it is to think that such medicines would be effective in all cases, even though they were made up of safe articles; for it is a well-known fact that scarcely any two cases of

the same general complaint agree in every essential, and it is necessary to treat them entirely differently. So where a patent medicine might, by any good luck, help one, another would not be benefited in the least. Thus the necessity of treatment by competent and intelligent physicians.

We find, as we examine into the facts, that the men who have placed proprietary medicines on the market have, in nearly every instance, grown immensely wealthy. There is not an exception to this rule, so far as we know. Immense sums of money have to be expended in judiciously advertising the patent wares; but this comes out of the pockets of the consumers, in time. The profits, therefore, must be enormous, as one may readily perceive. There is no desire to aid humanity that prompts the manufacturer of these nostrums; it is simply the wish of the maker to get rich, and he is sharp enough to understand that the public is gullible, and that it will swallow any bait he may dangle in front of its mouth. So he makes up the nauseous mixture, gets a hundred times its value, laughs in his sleeve, and pockets the cash. The public swallows the medicine, and goes to its grave.

#### ELECTRIC HUMBUGS.

Among other medical swindles is an old thing in new form which has recently turned up to notice once more. It is, says an Eastern journal, "a pamphlet on 'electro-voltaic and magnetic belts, bands

and appliances for self-cure,' which is one of those pernicious publications ostensibly intended for the benefit of young men, but really calculated to work upon their imaginations and excite their fears; having convinced the unfortunate reader that he is in a bad way, he is ready for the assurance that his only hope lies in the application of this electric concern." Electricity may be useful, but it should be applied by a regular physician, or immediately under his advice. Nearly all the so-called electrical appliances are perfectly useless, and simply contrivances for getting money out of the credulous.

#### PATENT MEDICINE CIRCULARS.

Still another variety of advertisements is sent out in every daily and in many weekly papers, that works endless evil. We refer to the demoralizing patent medicines and "confidential" private-diseases notices. These are always swindles of the worst class, and should be shunned as though they were vipers. If one is unfortunate, the family physician is able and willing to relieve the trouble, and can do so with safety. Advertising doctors are generally quacks, and prey upon the misfortunes of mankind.





# ADVERTISING DODGES.

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## MINING STOCK HUMBUG.

A neat way of raising the wind is that resorted to by "Clark & Co., adjusters of claims in the United States and Europe, No. 1267 Broadway, New York." The following letter serves as an introduction :

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_,

Dear Sir :

Is this your signature on the inclosed slip of paper? If so, you are entitled to a certificate of Gold Mining Stock, valued at Five Hundred Dollars.

The money you sent in the letter from which the inclosed slip has been clipped, was invested on the Parisian Margin Principle, which resulted in lawfully securing for you the certificate of stock referred to above.

Write on receipt of this, and return to us the inclosed slip of paper, so we can compare it with your signature, and if found to be correct, we will prove your claim, receive the stock, and forward it to you.

Respectfully Yours,

CLARK & Co.

P. S.—Let us know by what express you wish the stock.

The secret of this very plausible operation is this: By some means or other, possibly through school catalogues, directories or newspaper lists, the names of hundreds of parties throughout the country are

obtained. The wonderful house of Clark & Co. then write the name on a slip of paper and send it to the address, with the foregoing letter (which is written on a sheet of nicely lithographed paper, and *looks* authentic and business-like) by which a *previous correspondence is implied*. A large per cent of those to whom they write, grab at the bait, and imagine that the house has made a mistake in the person. The inference is that some one has sent \$500 to Clark & Co., and has hired them to invest the same in stocks; but that the house has so much business on hand that it has become confused and is uncertain about the address and the identity of the investor. Clark & Co. evidently wish to protect themselves and so send on the slip, asking for a genuine signature to prove the authenticity of the original (supposed) letter.

If the man who receives the letter given above is inclined to be dishonest, he sees a way of making \$500, and running no risk, as the responsibility will rest with Clark & Co., in case of a "mistake." So he writes to the firm and sends his signature. In due course of time he gets a notice from them, saying that the signatures agree, and that they have proved his claim. The stock is shipped, as he directed, and all that the firm requires is for him to pay the commissions and charges, "as agreed upon in his original letter." The fellow watches the express office, and soon finds therein a neat package, sent C. O. D., with a bill of from \$2.50 to \$5.00, as "commissions, charges, etc." He is, perhaps, allowed to open the

package, and sure enough, there is a regularly engraved certificate of stock in the company referred to. The gudgeon thinks there is a mistake in the person, beyond question, and is willing to pay the small amount of the bill. This is done, and Clark & Co. duly receive their "commissions."

The certificate sent, of course, is not worth the paper it is printed on, and the fellow is "out" just the amount of his bill. If he ever "kicks" about it, he is informed that the house has his written claim of being a party whom he is not, and can cause his arrest for getting property under false pretenses. This frightens the victim into silence, and the matter is dropped.

#### "THE SECRET SERVICE COMPANY.

There is an elaborate plan in Cincinnati to catch victims, called the "American and European Secret Service Company." This "incorporation" claims to have branch offices in all the principal cities of Europe, and also to have a capital of \$100,000. It publishes the *American Criminal Gazetteer*, and has its general headquarters at the city named above.

The plan of work is like this: Names are obtained by the usual method of catalogues, directories, etc., and the following letter is sent out to each address:

DEAR SIR:

Yours received. Having determined to enlist a few more men in our force, as officers, we submit for your consideration the following circulars and agreement, which will explain our system and convey a correct idea of the magnitude and importance of

the Company's operations. Being an old, well-established, and the only incorporated Detective Bureau in the world, it is superfluous to state that the amount of business transacted is far in excess of any similar organization; hence, we require the services of none but honest, energetic and discreet men, always willing to act when called upon to do duty. If you consider yourself worthy to fill the office, you may communicate with us without delay, as no appointments will be made after our quota is filled. We require officers to be regular subscribers to the *American Criminal Gazetteer*, that they be fully posted on crime and criminals in all parts of America and Europe. It also conveys such information as can be had through no other channel. If all is satisfactory, write at once and send the subscription price and two 3-cent stamps for postage on your commission, instructions, etc. Please use that discretion in all our correspondence which the case would seem to call for.

Very truly,

AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN SECRET SERVICE CO.

P. S.—We send copy of paper by this mail.

On the back of this surprising document, which startles the recipient with its opening words, "Yours received," is printed a mass of "extracts from the press," being puffs of the Company from the *Loveland Weekly Herald*, the *Saturday Night*, and other perfectly reliable and easily-seen(?) journals. The reader is also again informed that the *Gazetteer* is \$2 per annum, cash in advance.

The sample paper sent out is a large eight-page concern, filled with personal sketches of individuals who have distinguished themselves as agents and officers of the Company, but who, strange to note, live in Dakota, California and other parts of the country remote from the centers of civilization, or in the East.



Probably the editions (if any) sent to California contain sketches of *Eastern men*, thus averaging the account of personal praise, and rendering it impossible for either section to find out anything about those prodigies of valor through direct interview.

The inside pages are filled with accounts of crime, from the four quarters of the country, and with such offers of rewards as this :

#### \$20,000 REWARD

will be paid for the arrest and conviction of all, or \$2,000 for each, of the eight to fifteen desperadoes who, on the 19th of August, 1878, in Big Canyon, on Rattlesnake Creek, near Elk Mountain, Carbon County, Wyoming, massacred and plundered Deputy Sheriff Robert Widdowfield and H. H. Vinson. The murderers got away with what is here described : One dark-gray mare, branded "H S" on right shoulder and "A" on the left hip, a heavy California saddle, new bridle and light-gray blanket; one light-gray mare, eight years old, branded "O C" on left hip, anchor with cross on left shoulder, newly-leathered California saddle, with hand-holes on hind tree; one bay mare, branded "C B" on left shoulder, white spot in forehead, very heavy build, numerous saddle-marks.

#### \$2,300 REWARD

is offered for the capture and detention of Barton Simpson, who is charged with the murder of James White, in Manchester, Clay Co., Ky., on the 7th of September, 1878. He is five feet ten inches high, one hundred and forty pounds weight, twenty-two years old, sallow complexion, light hair, large mouth, beardless face, thick lips, dark-gray eyes, long neck.

Then follow forty-six other rewards, and a long list of "exposures" of individuals accused of divers and sundry rascalities.

The field of detection is broad and comprehensive, and the labor is not only made to appear easy and exciting, but exceedingly profitable to the officers. Columns of "instructions," correspondence and other attractive subjects, comprise the remainder of the reading-matter, and several columns are devoted to the advertising of detectives' outfits, cheap revolvers, handcuffs, etc.

Then we find several columns of advertising of cheap pictures, which are represented as rare works of art, and are offered at about 1,000 per cent profit to the Company. The paper, in fact, is well gotten up, and is calculated to awaken a desire on the part of speculative and venturesome men to join the force.

An "agreement" is referred to in the letter. It reads as follows:

"Having been duly apprised of the discreetness and reliability of Mr. ———, we, the American and European Secret Service Company, of Cincinnati, Ohio, agree, upon his becoming a regular subscriber to the *American Criminal Gazetteer*, to appoint him as a detective officer of this organization, and duly sign and forward him a commission, badge, rules and regulations governing the officers of this corps. And the said Company further agrees to continue him on the force as long as he shall conform to rules and regulations. It is also agreed that wherever this Company shall order him to do special duty, his pay shall be from \$3 to \$5 per diem, as the importance of the case may demand; and all necessary expenses incurred in executing special orders shall be defrayed by this Company. But nothing herein contained shall be construed as conferring any authority or emoluments, unless a full compliance with the requirements is made."

Then follow an elaborate red seal and attestation by the Company. The form of this document is one

calculated to deceive a person ignorant of the real workings of a detective bureau; but the appeal is subtle and the flattery of a nature to win the confidence of innocent young men. The "agreement" contains a quantity of stuff, printed on the back thereof, explanatory of the magnitude of the corporation. It is represented as extending entirely around the globe. The motto of the worthy house is "Malice toward none; charity for all." It generously seeks to aid all municipal detective organizations, and longs to "bring criminals to justice." The secret of the efficiency of the force lies in the fact that the men are bound together in indissoluble bands, by means of the *American Criminal Gazetteer*, price, \$2, which is the only requirement made by the Company to gain admission to the noble society. When the Company calls the boys to duty, it will pay from \$3 to \$5 per day, and all hotel and traveling expenses. They assure the correspondent that, as cases cannot be manufactured, no guarantee of labor can be made in advance, and that circumstances alone can decide how long and at what times an ambitious young officer can distinguish himself, at \$5 a day. The qualifications of an officer are: Ability to read and write English, good moral character, discretion and energy, temperance (on no conditions will a drunkard be employed), and cheerful and prompt observance of rules. The chief advantage derived from membership is the practice of controlling one's passions and the cultivation of the high moral sentiment of "malice toward none and charity for all" (in large type).

Now, the Company puts the question squarely to the man receiving the circular: Are you such a fellow? Can you conscientiously say that you believe yourself competent to fill the position of office of our force? If you are inclined to admit that you possess all the virtues (as most men are willing to do when put under sufficient pressure), then the Company opens its protecting arms and receives you to its bosom upon receipt of \$2 in advance for the indispensable *Gazetteer*. As the circular says: "The honor of filling such a position is apparent. It admits of a man displaying his superior talents over those of his fellow-man, by detecting his strategy and counteracting his least honorable actions. To hold the position, he must be a man of honor, and as such is looked up to. He is a protector of his own and his neighbors' rights and privileges, and a guardian of the common interests of every law-abiding citizen."

The question naturally arises, How can the Company make money out of such a scheme? The method is obvious, if one but stops to consider all the points. In the first place, of course, there is no such Company, or rather no such incorporation, as the "American and European Secret Service Company." The name itself stamps the concern a fraud. Detective organizations (of which there are a number in this country) do not operate in any such manner. They do not advertise for officers, but choose from among the most experienced men on regular police forces the very best that can be found. It is as absurd to think that any



man possessing high moral character can become a successful detective, as it is to believe that managers of police organizations have to advertise for members of their forces. Scores of men are always waiting on the spot for vacancies to occur, and from such lists the forces are made up.

But the Company we are now exposing bases its hope of winning money on one sure card, and that is the universal fascination concerning detective work. Even boys dream of bold ventures into that field of excitement and hazard, while they secretly pore over the yellow-back novels so widely circulated, or drink inspiration from such weak stuff as Pinkerton's detective stories. There is a natural love of adventure in the youthful mind which becomes irresistible when hope of large reward is coupled with it. So the Company starts out by sending its circulars to thousands of names, obtained as heretofore described, and counts with certainty upon getting a given per cent of replies thereto. These circulars begin: "Yours received," as though the concern had already maintained correspondence with the recipient, and leads him to imagine that the letter is sent to him by mistake. This is a shrewd dodge, for no matter how conscientious he may be, the recipient's curiosity is aroused. There is such an impenetrable secrecy about letters, both by law and custom, that the moment one gets a letter not rightly his, and can safely read it, his curiosity overcomes his honesty, and he gives it careful perusal. In the instance in question, the letter so

unexpectedly placed before him sets all his senses agog. Here is evidently a chance to make money easily, and in a line of service which he has always desired to try. Before the letter is finished his vanity is touched. The appeal to his conscience to determine whether he is really fit to be a detective, *i. e.*, whether he is moral, temperate, intelligent and educated, clinches the matter. Of course he is all this, and even more. Give him but a fair chance and he can and will distinguish himself as a worker in the secret field. He reads the recommendations of the Company. True, they are from papers he has never heard of before, but that shows his own ignorance of the broad newspaper world. He reads the "argument," which is embellished with a cut of an eagle like that on Government land patents, and the big red seal duly stamped and fringed at the edges makes his eyes open wide with astonishment at the thought that he should be known by name to such an incorporation. Then he reads the assurance that the Company has chosen him for his "discreetness and reliability," and argues with himself that some well-posted man must have sent the Company his name. But what does all this cost? Nothing! That is, nothing to speak of. Of course, the "rules must be complied with," and those are as yet unknown to him; but by sending the trifling sum of \$2, his outfit and rules will be forwarded, and also a copy of the *American Criminal Gazetteer*, without which no well-regulated detective can exist. He sees that the

Company guarantees him from \$3 to \$5 per day "when on duty" under their orders, and realizes that one day's labor will pay the entire bill. Next comes the *Gazetteer* itself, and therein he beholds the score or more of grand offers of reward for the capture of criminals. Of course the paper must be had, and he must be kept posted on such matters.

He sends the \$2 and joins the party. He waits patiently for "orders." He receives circulars of encouragement and advice, and finds it absolutely necessary that he should prepare for future work by buying a revolver and a set of hand-cuffs of the Company. He is surprised to see that the paper is a *monthly* one, sent out at double the price of a large metropolitan weekly, but that does not awaken suspicion at first. He keeps the whole matter *secret*, as his "rules" require him to do, but by repeated perusal he is induced to send small sums of money to the "Monitor Publishing Co., of Cincinnati," and to do other equally foolish things. He is blinded by the loud and vigorous *expose* of swindles made in the *Gazetteer*, and falls a victim to the scheme.

The money is made on the *Gazetteer* and the articles sold by the "Company," which, of course, is the same under various titles. The object of getting the fellow's name as a special detective is merely to secure him as a subscriber to the paper, and make him a general dupe. No orders to duty are ever sent, and, after a year's experience, the victim realizes that his revolver, hand-cuffs, badge and commission are the

only evidences of the "official" position held by him. He is sold and quietly swallows his grievance.

"PARTNER WANTED."

In almost every issue of the dailies in the large cities is to be found an innocent-looking advertisement like this:

Partner wanted, in a light but profitable business. None but men with \$500 need apply. Address "X," No. —, *Times* office.

A friend of the writer took it upon himself to investigate the matter, and being of somewhat simple appearance and manners, was well designed by nature to play the role of detective. At an hour designated in an advertisement of similar purport to that given above, the gentleman called at the address. Upon the door of the office was a plain sign, "Robert Brown, Commission Merchant." The thing looked very plausible, and the searcher after truth turned the knob. In a well-furnished office sat a middle-aged man, of fine personal appearance, deeply engaged in the examination of large books and an extensive lot of correspondence. As the young man entered, the broker raised his eyes and courteously responded to the inquiry if that was Mr. Brown.

The young man, whom we will speak of as Mr. C., remarked that he was in search of business and had noticed an advertisement in the *Times*, calling for a partner, and had written to the address and received his reply. He desired to know more of the opening and had, therefore, called.



Mr. Brown at once became all attention, but was so thoroughly a man of business that he could not devote as much time to explanation then as he wished, and would merely say that the occupation he was then engaged in was that of general grocery commission trade. The business had grown out of his hands and he needed a partner. If Mr. C. would kindly call again at 10 o'clock the next morning, he would be at liberty to fully inform him of the matter. Mr. C. agreed to call, and retired.

As the clock struck 10 on the following morning, Mr. C. took off his hat in the office of the genial Mr. Brown. The commission dealer was ready for him, and smiled blandly, but not alarmingly, on the young stranger. Mr. Brown was a man who believed in first impressions, and was so thoroughly pleased with C.'s open countenance that he really hoped they could come to terms. Mr. Brown had one troublesome habit—he was an inveterate smoker—and if Mr. C. would not object he would beg of him to light a cigar—a real imported one obtained through the headquarters—while the merchant did likewise.

So, over the curling smoke of a choice Havana, the business in hand was discussed. Brown had been eight years in the business. He carried no stock, but had arrangements with wholesale dealers by which he obtained his goods at lowest possible rates. His plan of selling was original with himself. It was by means of agents. He advertised and secured the very best of traveling men, who made wholesale

or retail sales throughout the West, and sent their orders direct to him. By this means he was able to have fresh stock always to send, and was not limited as to range of sales. There was no such thing as store rent, insurance, dead stock or loss by failures. He sold C. O. D., and himself made cash purchases when he ordered goods. He had some twelve hundred agents, and his receipts were large. Of course he made but a small fraction of per cent, but what he did get was clear profit.

His agency system worked to a charm. For example, when a man wished to take a certain territory, he supplied him with such a sample-case as the one in hand. (Here Mr. B. exhibited a very neatly arranged hand-satchel, with numerous lines of groceries put up in little boxes and vials, but all of which were the fancy groceries of the trade. Staples were sold on their merits, by card.) These cases were shipped to the agents, who paid \$14 for them. Other supplies, like price-lists, instructions, etc., and the constant record of prices current, were sent free of charge, as the market required.

Mr. Brown then exhibited his pile of correspondence that day received. There were some two dozen letters, each from a different man and place, and each containing an order for goods, ranging from, perhaps, \$10 to \$150. The orders were on paper furnished by Mr. Brown to his men, and were like a stack of blanks just received from the printer. In fact, Mr. B. was so particular and methodical that he insisted on his

agents using nothing but such blanks as he prepared for their use.

In the desk at which he sat, Mr. Brown had at least two thousand letters filed in splendid order. He took down several packages, as samples, and opened them, without apparent regard for their locality. Each one contained an order for goods, and each was duly minuted, "Goods shipped per —— express on such and such a day," etc. All was order of the most rigid kind.

Next followed an examination of Mr. Brown's nicely-kept books. Large journals and ledgers were duly opened at random, and various individual accounts (for each agent had a separate account in that model ledger) looked up. True to his prediction, every bill was properly posted, and the letters tallied accurately with the books.

The profits of the business was the next matter discussed. Mr. B. had already admitted that his commissions were small, but he was proud to say that the aggregate net profit was not less than \$500 per month, and sometimes reached \$700. This was, indeed, a neat, clean business, and one which he had silently built up himself. If other merchants knew of his plan, it would ruin the trade now exclusively controlled by him. To avoid publicity in the city, Mr. B. had concluded to advertise for a partner from the country who would not be likely to interfere with the business in case he did not wish to become a partner by opening a rival house of the same kind. What

he wanted was an honest, competent young man, who would take the burden of routine work from his shoulders; just such a man, in short, as he felt Mr. C. was. Mr. Brown prided himself upon being a good judge of human nature, and read the face of his young friend like an open book.

He wanted a partner with \$500 in cash; not that he needed the money, but because he knew that only by becoming pecuniarily interested would any man do justice to such a work.

Why did he wish a partner rather than a clerk? Easy enough to answer, and just what he was going to mention, but this was in strictest confidence. If the real reason became known, the injury to Mr. B. would be great. Would Mr. C. promise not to mention the fact in case of his refusal to invest his money? Yes? Well then the secret was this:

The well-known fruit-canning house of Blank & Dash, of Baltimore, had known him for years. Mr. Blank had repeatedly said: "Brown, if we ever open a branch house in Chicago, no other person but yourself shall have charge of it!" Because of his continued refusal to give up his present trade, Blank & Dash had postponed opening that branch concern. At last Mr. Dash had come to Chicago on purpose to plead with him, and he had so far committed himself as to say that if a suitable partner could be obtained in the commission trade, he might consent to act as their Western agent.



By the way, added Brown, with a burst of confidence, as he slapped Mr. C. on the shoulder, and then deliberately lighted another cigar, do you know Hon. Mr. Sharpun, Member of Congress for my district?

No; Mr. C. was confused over the admission that he had never spoken to the distinguished gentleman.

Well, Brown was sure C. knew of him, and valued his opinion. Brown was over to Sharpun's house last night—wives on great terms of intimacy, you know—playing cribbage. Brown happened to say to Sharpun that Blank & Dash talked of opening a branch in Chicago. Sharpun had instantly exclaimed, "Is that so? Why, such a business would make a grand opening for some lucky fellow who would have the management of that concern. Not less than a cool \$30,000 a year, and no mistake." Brown had then told his friend, in confidence, of the offer made him by the Baltimore house, and Sharpun had ordered in another bottle of that superb brand of his, which he chose while in Europe, and had called out to his wife in the next room, where the ladies were, that "Brown was in luck again!" Fact.

Of course, Brown mentioned this merely incidental to the business, but to show his young friend that persons of rare good judgment regarded the offer as a grand one. He thought Sharpun overestimated the profits, but still it was a big thing.

Now, that was the real reason why Brown wanted a partner. He never gave up a bird in hand for a covey in cover, and so did not feel like letting his little busi-

ness here go out of his control until he knew exactly what he had with Blank & Dash. If he put a clerk in the office, nine to one the fellow would steal him blind and ruin the business besides. So, what he wanted was a nice young fellow to take a pecuniary interest and feel a desire to win.

Again, if C. proved to be the capital fellow Brown thought him—for Brown was cautious withal, in spite of his first impressions—he would ultimately take him in as a general partner in the canning trade and all!

Of course, if Brown took Mr. C. as a partner, he would introduce him into the social set at the club, and make him feel at home. There was nothing aristocratic about Brown, not in the least.

Mr. C. waited patiently until the full plan was made known, and then said: Mr. Brown, I like your frankness, and I am charmed with your business offer. It is more than I expected to find. I will accept the place and put in \$500 as my share of the capital, with the understanding that I am to have an equal share in both branches of your business. Will that suit you?

Brown got up from his easy chair and grasped Mr. C. by the hand. He was overjoyed at the young man's acceptance. When would he come in and perfect the papers? It was agreed that the thing should be arranged on the next day, and Mr. C. departed.

On the following morning the worthy couple met again. Everything was as sweet as new-mown hay. The preliminary arrangements were made, and Mr.

C. remarked, as he drew his cigar leisurely from his lips, "Mr. Brown, I am sorry for one feature of our plan. The ready cash business troubles me. I have plenty of money invested in real estate, but I have no funds in bank. Now, I'll tell you what I'll do. You say that the business will net \$500 a month, at the lowest figure. That is \$250 for each of us. I will come in here and manage your business, and will allow my share to remain in the concern for two months, making \$500, we will then be equal partners."

Mr. Brown's face first grew sober, and then relaxed into a broad grin. He looked steadily at the youth for a few moments, and then slowly observed :

"Young man, I guess you are not the fellow I'm looking for !"

Mr. C. burst into a hearty laugh, and responded : "I rather think, Mr. Brown, that I am not. I also think that you have caught a Tartar !"

Now the secret of this branch of swindles is this. The whole display of business is a fraud. Brown has no agents at all. The sample-case, the letters, the books and the correspondence are all a part of the game. The story of the canning trade is a delusion and a snare. Every part of the swindle was arranged by Brown. He was one of the most skillful confidence men in the country, and used to rope in from one to three of these green fellows every month. The success of his business lay in the admirable manner he had of working up details, and when he had a spooney hooked, he let him stay around for a few days.

Of course no more letters came, and no business was transacted. Before a week was out the victim saw that he had been confided. He then began to plead with Brown for his money, and when he saw that such a method would not win, he threatened suit. But he soon found that neither tears nor prayers would move Brown, and when the confidence operator offered to settle the matter for \$100 to \$150, the fellow was glad enough to take the money and clear out.

Usually the victims are men of limited means, and have no way of pressing a suit. They are strangers in the city, without friends, and are ashamed to tell their home people of their sell. So they bottle their wrath and consent to a compromise, at a small sum, rather than lose all, and then have no means to live on or leave the city with.

Young men in the country can count safely on one thing, and that is that all good business opportunities are snapped up without advertisements or display. If Brown had really possessed the chance he claimed, he would have said nothing about it, but have placed a relative or friend in the office and gone on with both the commission and canning trades. Such offers are palpable frauds ; but many a self-boastful, shrewd man gets caught by the confidence sharpers. The city is full of those men who prey upon society, and seek their victims among a class that can ill afford to lose any money, because they have so little of it.

Do not, under any circumstances, answer an advertisement requiring the investment of money, without



first consulting some person in whom you can rely, as to the advisability of the step. Advertisers in other than established trades are generally sharpers who seek whom they may impose upon. The city papers are filled with little suggestive items of this character, and are a fruitful source of injury to their readers.

Too much prudence cannot be exercised by all persons, and a refusal to listen to tempting offers frequently results in the saving of hundreds of dollars.

#### THE CHEAP-JEWELRY SWINDLE.

The love of display is an inherent quality of the human mind, from the barbarian to the august ruler of the greatest empire of the world. When, through a lack of means, genuine gold and precious stones cannot be obtained with which to bedeck the person, the average man and woman must content themselves with cheaper styles of adornment. The passion for jewelry is universal, and it naturally follows that the desire will find some means by which to gratify itself.

This weakness among men and women, like all others, is taken advantage of by sharp speculators, and is a fertile field in which to develop swindling enterprises. The weaknesses and follies of mankind supply the means for the furtherance of humbugs; and the smaller the weakness the more common it is apt to be.

The cheap, or what is commonly termed the "snide," jewelry business is conducted on entirely different

principles from canvassing. Instead of openly approaching the intended victim, and wheedling him out of his money by plausible arguments and well-turned phrases, the attack is subtle and insidious. It is made through newspaper advertisements, circulars and flattering appeals in a private way. Nearly every person addressed is of course inclined to believe that there is no danger of the fact of an investment ever becoming known, and the consequence is they cautiously inclose a small amount for some fancied article which is guaranteed "to deceive the most thoroughly posted."

To explain one of the many plans resorted to by the cheap-jewelry swindlers, we can do no better than present in this connection an *expose* of one of the most glaring and successful ventures of this kind ever attempted in the West, and which came under the writer's observation, but which has never before been explained to the public.

About three years ago, there appeared in the most widely circulated newspapers of the country a small advertisement to the effect that any one who would send his address to L. S. Sherman & Co., Cresco, Mich., would receive catalogues, instructions and advice paving the way to the acquirement of wealth. No money was required to accompany the first letter—not even a postage stamp for the letter of response. Those innocent-looking advertisements naturally came to the notice of the very class for whom intended, and awakened the curiosity of hundreds of persons. Let-

ters began to pour in upon the "firm." Each correspondent's name and address were carefully preserved, and circulars returned in sealed envelopes, imparting the important information that the junior member of the house, while visiting the Lake Superior region on a pleasure tour, discovered large quantities of very beautiful stones, which closely resembled precious gems. After thoroughly considering the question of how to utilize these choice bits of crystal, this inventive genius decided upon a plan of establishing a factory for the manufacture of cheap jewelry, whereby could thus be given to the world the rare treat which otherwise would lie beyond its grasp. So conscientious was the junior member, that he refused to employ the class of jewelers obtainable in this country, and—so ran the announcement—made a special trip to Japan solely for the purpose of securing the most skillful manipulators of metals to be found in that wonderful empire. He had employed some eight hundred of the best workmen to be found on the island, and had returned with them to the United States, at "enormous expense." (These people always have to pay fabulous sums for what they get!) The next labor was to invent and construct the necessary machinery for the manufacture of the right sort of jewelry. (No known machinery in the country could fashion it.) After several months of inspection, the firm had decided upon the town of Cresco, Mich., as the most convenient place in which to erect their works. Immense buildings were put up, and, after many



months of preparation, the firm were ready to place their wares on the market. So conscientious were they, and so confident of ultimate success, that the house chose to devote several months to preliminary experiment at manufacture before offering their goods to the public, preferring to attain "absolute perfec-



MANUFACTORY OF L. S. SHERMAN & CO., CRESCO, MICH.

tion" rather than hazard their trade by sending out "crude samples."

The firm was "rejoiced to say" that the results of their experiments were beyond their most sanguine expectations in point of success. Perfect jewelry was now made which was so charming in appearance as to "defy detection" when placed side by side with



genuine goods. The class of work made by them could not be equaled by any other manufacturers, owing to the "immense outlay" and the employment of "practiced Japanese experts" as workmen. Accompanying the circulars was a newspaper called the *Cresco Pioneer*, purporting to be published in the town where the works were located. The sheet was a model country paper. It was clearly printed on good paper, and contained numerous advertisements of local business houses and professional men. The issue sent out was dated April 1 of that year, and was, if we remember correctly, Volume VI, Number 26. An editorial described the immense jewelry factory of L. S. Sherman & Co. The mammoth brick structure had just been enlarged, and that event in the history of the town was worthy of proper record in the veracious columns of the *Pioneer*. An elaborate account of the methods of operation was given, or so much thereof as could be witnessed by the uninitiated eye of the reporter; for a portion of the process was "known only to sworn employes," and carried on behind locked doors. The article was well written, and contained an air of truth. Any one taking up that paper would have been impressed with the generosity and public spirit of the owners of that magnificent institution which gave employment to "hundreds of hands" and "infused life and prosperity into all branches of local trade." In the minor items of news given in the paper was an account of a "sad accident" which happened to one of the Japanese employes of the firm.

While oiling a shaft, his loose garments (for they still retained their peculiar national dress) were caught in the revolving machinery, and, before he could be rescued, he was "terribly mangled." A doctor, whose professional card appeared on the first page, attended the sufferer, who was "doing as well as could be expected." Throughout the paper were urgent appeals to manufacturers to come to Cresco and locate. There was nothing in it to awaken the slightest distrust, but rather everything to inspire confidence.

Another circular of instructions was sent at the same time to the correspondents, telling that samples of the jewelry would be sent out for certain sums, ranging, according to articles, we believe, from about \$3 to \$20. The higher grades included watches of different values, but the smaller lots were composed solely of the wonderful "Lake Superior Jewelry."

Money began to pour in upon the firm, and samples were shipped by the score. So far as the letter of the contract was concerned, there was no swindle in this operation. Just such jewelry was sent as was represented. There were pins, buttons and ear-rings of pretty design, and watches of certain form, but uncertain movements, duly forwarded to those who sent their cash. The scheme was to make the correspondents "agents" in most instances; and they were, in turn, assured that large orders could be obtained in the rural regions by a prudent system of canvassing.

Now, the secret part of all this venture lay just here: The "Co." of the firm was one of the sharp-

est young men in the West, named M. V. Wagner, who had once made an immense fortune in a swindle known as the "Sunlight Oil." He is a man fertile in resources and bold in the execution of his plans, but was, at that time, under the cloud of failure and exposure, through the *Chicago Times* and other papers. He conceived the idea of recuperating his finances by the dodge here described, and associated with him a young man named L. S. Shearman, as his own name would be fatal. Shearman disguised his own identity and attempted to shirk responsibility by spelling his name without the "a," thereby making the firm L. S. Sherman & Co. Wagner had carried on his sunlight oil business at Marshall, Mich., and as the name of that place was thoroughly identified with this humbug, he was wise enough to appreciate the fact that his new plan would not work if Marshall was given as the address, and so it was that he chose Cresco, a little hamlet about five miles west of Marshall, as the scene of operations. Shearman used to carry the "firm's" mail back and forth twice a day by private conveyance, and had his office in Marshall. There was, of course, no factory at Cresco, nor did the two men own a dollar's worth of property in any such concern. They had their bogus jewelry made in Chicago, or some other point, and shipped it from Cresco, after packing the samples in Marshall. The newspaper and circulars were printed in Chicago, and no paper was ever published at Cresco. Only one edition was printed, as a job, by a well-known Chicago printing

house. The story concerning the Japanese was entirely fictitious, and intended to give an air of reality to the undertaking. The whole account of the business and method of the firm was false.

The business prospered wonderfully for a short time, and the cash receipts averaged about \$300 daily, when, at last, a day of reckoning came.

The Postmaster at Cresco was a conscientious fellow, who was not only astonished, but alarmed, at the large number of letters sent to L. S. Sherman & Co., and began to pry into the matter. His zeal outran his discretion, for he actually interfered with the "firm's" mail and sent word to the agent of the Post Office Department, who investigated the subject and pronounced it within the law, but still a questionable proceeding in a moral sense. The result of the agitation led to the breaking-up of the business, and Mr. Wagner went into a more legitimate line of trade.

Now, we have in the foregoing but one of the many plans which are almost daily resorted to by designing men in various portions of the United States to swindle innocent people. These schemes are inaugurated particularly by unscrupulous persons for the purpose of "taking in," as the expression goes, those persons of the rural regions who may have a desire to adorn their persons but who may not be blessed with sufficient means to gratify their taste by the purchase of valuable articles from responsible dealers. You can hardly pick up a newspaper of the day, and particu-



larly the country papers or story periodicals, but you will be confronted with glaring advertisements of this or that concern in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, St. Louis, and other cities, in which most astounding inducements are held out. For instance, here is a paper—no matter the name, the reader has but to refer to any one of the current sheets—which, in attractive types, announces that the company whose name is to be found at the bottom will furnish “diamonds in solid gold mountings for one dollar.” Then follow cuts of rings, shirt-studs and ear-rings, with high-sounding names, to which is appended the statement that “the academy of a foreign country (a vague sort of recommendation) has announced that a certain professor has “really obtained the true diamond.” As these one-dollar “diamonds” bear the name of this eminent discoverer of the secret of the glistening crystal, this “indorsement” of the “foreign academy” is rung in simply to give character to the scheme and catch innocent gudgeons, who, if they would stop a moment to reflect, would let diamonds of this character go to the winds and save their money for something more valuable or useful. This advertisement further states that, on the receipt of one dollar, either one of the articles displayed will be sent, and “a book on diamonds” (trash that will make good kindling) “mailed free.” When, in concluding their advertisement, this company guarantee the diamonds (rings, ear-rings, shirt-studs, etc.) to be “mounted in solid gold,” the real baseness of the entire representations

may be understood. When a small, plain gold ring can scarcely be purchased of a reputable dealer for \$5 or \$10, how is it possible to guarantee a ring of fancy workmanship to be "pure gold" and worth but one dollar? Out upon such frauds!

Then, who ever heard of the people who add their "testimonials?" This one says "they have no equal;" another, "simply elegant;" another, "elicited wonder and admiration;" another, "truly marvelous;" and so on to the end of the swindling chapter.

Our advice to our readers is, let cheap jewelry alone. There is an old and trite adage which has come down to us with just as much force as it had in the days of Poor Richard, to whom it was given to see through all sorts of hypocritical surroundings and fraudulent coverings—there is an old adage which says that "a fool and his money are soon parted." Please bear this in mind, and reflect, when you find yourself tempted to invest in this or that article which may seem "dirt cheap," that you are no doubt about to purchase something concerning the merits of which you know little, and that its very surprising cheapness must stamp it as an imposition.

Don't send your money to people who offer to give "something for nothing," or a valuable article for small pay. You will be cheated every time. If you get a pair of sleeve-buttons, they won't suit you, and will show to be the best kind of brass in a few weeks. And so with all other articles; they're all made of the same materials.

How much more satisfactory to save one's money and purchase according to the means, and have what you get good. At the same time you patronize home trade and have some show of redress should you be deceived, as sometimes occurs, by the one in whom you placed confidence.

We are particularly emphatic about this matter, for we have in our experience seen so much of this swindling that we desire to impress upon the country reader the necessity of being on his guard against imposition. Country people are the ones against whom the shaft of deceit is particularly leveled, one reason being that it is well known that they have more confidence in mankind than have their city brothers, who have been through the mill of experience, and learned a lesson in dealing with humanity in general, and also that they are believed to be more inclined to wear cheap goods than are any other class, for the reason that they have less money, comparatively, to spend for such articles. So, bear in mind that you are the first angled for, and don't gratify the fisherman by nibbling at his hook. Our word for it, you will be dollars better off.

#### THE COUNTERFEIT-MONEY "DODGE."

Picking up a periodical a few days ago, we came upon a reference to an "old friend" in the matter of swindle exposes, which we reproduce here for the benefit of our readers:

It sometimes seems strange how frauds as "old as the hills" to us strike those to whom they are new. Ten or fifteen years

ago, the schemes for disposing of "the queer" or counterfeit money were "as plenty as blackberries." We have so often shown up the fraud that it seems like galvanizing a corpse to allude to it at this day after so long ago having explained the whole matter in the fullest detail. In brief, there is no law to prevent one from *offering* to supply counterfeit money. These shrewd chaps know that only those willing to be rascals will treat with them. They are too wide-awake to have any counterfeit money at all—not a dollar. Their whole object is to get hold of the good money of foolish knaves by promises, and give *nothing* in return, knowing that their victims dare not "squeal," as they will expose their own rascality. The style of correspondence in this line has changed, and, as the present form is so unlike the old style, we give here a specimen letter :

MY DEAR SIR: I wish to secure the services of a reliable person in your county to push the sale of a certain class of goods which I manufacture. I guarantee 100 per cent profit and over, according to the amount of capital invested. The goods are used by every one, and the business is *strictly confidential*, as it is the same as all other large-paying enterprises; it is not exactly legitimate; possibly you can guess its nature. Should you be willing to engage, let me know as soon as possible, and I will send you full particulars.

I am Yours, *in Confidence*,

J. B. W., BOWERY.

NEW YORK CITY, N. Y.

This business is only for those open for most anything there is money in.

It is the old story over again. Do not touch a letter of this kind.

#### COUNTERFEIT MONEY.

In New York, there is an unknown firm sending out circulars proposing to sell cigars in imitation of real Havanas, so that they can be sold at such a profit as to realize a fortune. It is obviously intended that counterfeit money should be read in place of cigars.



The circular reads: "They are made in brands of Ones, Twos, Fives and Tens, of green tobacco, and the most experienced smoker cannot detect them, even if that smoker be a banker. They are made by skillful men, who served their apprenticeship in Washington."

This is an artful means of suggesting that counterfeit money is really meant. If you receive a circular like the foregoing, depend upon it, the sender desires to send you counterfeit money.

#### PREPARATIONS FOR FORCING VEGETABLES AND FRUITS.

We hear every few days, of late, farmers asking advice regarding a so-called invention that "will enable any one to produce new potatoes, ripe fruits, berries, etc., all through the winter months." This article has been brought to the notice of the farmers in every section of the country by shrewd advertisements and attractive circulars. It is not whether this is a "valuable invention" that we wish to speak of it here; it makes no difference. If it were good, it would be kept by reputable dealers. But the point we wish to urge is, that the farmer should not sign any contract for this "invention." This contract binds the farmer to grow "not less than three acres of potatoes, according to the process of the invention, each year for seven years in succession," to sell the potatoes, and to pay over to the inventor one-fourth of the proceeds, without deducting for expenses. No advantage to be gained by the use of any process would warrant the

making of any such contract. It is referred to in the agreement as a "patent," and secrecy is enjoined. If a patent, why should it be kept quiet? Any one can, by paying 50 cents, get a copy of any patent. The thing is evidently a swindle. Let it alone.

#### GIFT-CONCERT SWINDLES.

"The Royal Dominion Gift Concert" is an old-time swindle, as to method, but has just been launched upon the public. Private letters (lithographed) are sent to residents of the States, from Canada, where the concert is held, informing them that if they will send \$5 for a club of five tickets they will be booked for a prize and no mistake. Of course there will be Americans just foolish enough to send the money. The operators get hold of your address in some one of the hundreds of ways we have exposed, and then send you the circular. Don't have anything to do with them. Don't touch a "gift-concert," a "distribution," a "legal-decision" scheme, or a lottery under any guise.

#### BUTTER FOR FOUR CENTS A POUND!

The West has of late been very carefully and exhaustively worked by a chap who had a "butter-compound" for sale. This "invention" would enable any one using it to turn out no end of butter at "four cents a pound." No one has ever been able to light on the butter chap. He has turned up in all

the leading Western points, and has at last alighted near Boston. There is scarcely a farmer who has not been favored with a circular of this butter-compound fiend. As a literary curiosity only is it worth preserving. It shrieks for people to walk up and buy this stuff, which will enable them to make butter at "four cents a pound"—butter "that cannot be detected from pure cream butter." Isn't this just a little attenuated? If a man had a process that would do what this fraud says this will, would it be necessary for him to sell it at \$1 a box (enough to make 100 pounds of butter) and beseech other people to get rich when he himself might make \$1,000,000 in a day by turning it over to the butter men of any big city? It is preposterous. Don't have anything to do with any butter-compound fraud.

## FRAUDULENT BURNING-FLUIDS.

The mails are flooded with circulars setting forth the good qualities of cheap burning-fluids. "Light to the world" is the flaming motto they bear; "but death to the inhabitants thereof" ought to be added in bold-faced type. In rural districts, especially, these murderous liquids are vended, and they have various names. One great claim made for them is cheapness, and safety if burned in some particular lamp, or with this or that man's "patent burner." Let everything of this kind alone. It is a matter of life and death—especially death. Let everything going by the name

of "fluids" alone. As a well-known agricultural paper says: "Eat nothing, drink nothing, take as medicine nothing, put upon your land nothing, give your animals nothing, and especially *burn nothing*, that is secret."

#### FEMALE HAIR AGENTS.

There is a class of peripatetic cormorants who go about the country devouring the substance of the people thereof—and particularly of the females—known as hair-venders. They are sent out by some eighth or tenth rate establishment in large cities for the purpose of taking orders. The agents are generally women, sometimes rather flashily attired, and with a good deal of assurance. They make the farmers' wives and daughters believe that they can furnish them with the most fashionable coiffures and other hirsute contrivances for about one-half the price usually charged, and finally induce them to give an order. The goods, when received, will be the worst kind of fraud. The color will not compare with the hair of their own heads, or else the workmanship will be so poor that no lady of taste would wear it. They will find that they have had palmed off on them the cheapest hair in the market. If the agent does not succeed in selling to the farmer's wife any piece of hair-work, she will, no doubt, induce her to purchase a bottle of some kind of "bloom" or powder for the complexion, which will eventually ruin the skin. Look out for these hair agents at country hotels.



## SEED SWINDLES.

Seed swindles are constantly being practiced on farmers, and for some reason the farmers persist in taking in the tempting bait that is dangled before their eyes. Old plants are constantly being offered under new names. Wonderful seeds have lately, says an Eastern journal, "been offered by heretofore unknown dealers in obscure towns in Tennessee, Michigan and other Western States. Of course it is no prejudice to a good thing that it should have an obscure origin, but the things thus offered are either not good, or are offered under names likely to deceive. Thus 'Ivory Wheat' is no *wheat* at all, but the old Durra Corn, a form of which is offered as 'Pampas Rice,' while it is no more *rice* than it is wheat. The 'Diamond Wheat,' which is offered with much flourish of names, including 'Montana,' and other kinds of 'Rye,' is, as we shall show at another time, one of the oldest grains in cultivation. So the 'Hulless Oats,' 'as old as the hills,' every now and then turn up as the basis of a disastrous swindle. The 'Durra Corn,' the 'Polish (though now called Diamond Wheat, and by many other names) Wheat,' the old, very old, 'Hulless Oats,' all these, almost as old as agriculture itself—may have their uses; but to introduce them as *novelties*, or under new names, shows, on the part of those who advertise them, either ignorance or fraudulent intent, and, so far as the purchaser is concerned, it makes no difference which. Let every

farmer and gardener be assured that unless a 'novelty' in the way of field or garden seeds has the indorsement of some agricultural paper—is either commended by the editor of the paper or by some correspondents whose accuracy the editor indorses—let him be sure that he can afford to wait, or, if he tries the thing at all, let him do it on a scale so small that failure will be of no serious detriment."

#### DEALING ON 'CHANGE.

Unscrupulous operators in great cities send out inviting circulars making "advantageous offers." They will read, perhaps, that "there is a strong combination of New York and Chicago capitalists manipulating the wheat market, and a very large movement is about to occur which will make contracts exceedingly profitable. If you will send us an order for a straddle on January and February wheat, on either 2,500 or 5,000 bushels, costing respectively \$128.13 and \$256.25, leaving the account in our hands to handle, trading on it as we may deem judicious and to the best advantage, we will guarantee that the contract will make a profit, and, if it does not, we will refund your money. Of the two contracts, we prefer the larger, as it can be traded on to much better advantage." The sender of this circular will inform you that there are two principal reasons for making this offer: 1, Desire to secure your patronage; 2, desire to build up a business in your locality. And

the liberal firm will further hold up the tempting bait that "the contracts, with proper and careful handling, will undoubtedly pay from five to ten times their cost during the next thirty days, and those secured at an early date will probably be more successful."

These men are frauds. Have nothing to do with them. No reputable commission firm does business on this plan. If you should answer the circular, don't send a cent of money, but word your letter something after this fashion, and, ten to one, you will not be bothered any more :

GENTLEMEN : Yours of the 16th is at hand. If you are so positive of making a fat thing on the wheat corner, it strikes me that it would be more sensible for you to put in your own money, and so reap the entire benefit, rather than give a stranger the opportunity to sweep the board, and you only make a paltry commission. Now, if you are really in earnest, I would suggest that you place to my credit either one of the amounts named in yours as above noted, handle the same as best suits you, and, to convince you that there is nothing mean about me, you need remit but 50 per cent of the profit, which, I think, is a fair divide.

Respectfully,

\* \* \* \*

#### GRAIN-SAMPLERS.

A new swindle is reported from Wisconsin. It has proved successful, and will be tried elsewhere. Two men with a lumber wagon went through the country from house to house, asking for samples of wheat to the amount of a peck or half bushel, which they said they were going to send to Chicago for inspection by Keene, the great wheat speculator, who intended getting up a corner on wheat, and was going to send agents all

through the country buying up wheat from farmers at an advance of 10 cents per bushel in order to effect the corner. The men claimed to be agents of Keene. Almost every farmer complied by giving at least half a bushel, which was duly numbered and the name of the contributor duly recorded to give the transaction a business-like appearance. It is said that several parties were out at the same time, on this kind of an expedition, and that when they each got a good big load of wheat they took it to the mills in the neighborhood, sold it and skipped out. The operators were cool and deliberate in their transactions and threw farmers entirely off their guard. One farmer told them his suspicions that all was not right, and they laughed at him, and finally made the thing look so straight that he felt ashamed of himself and dealt them out half a bushel with an apology.

Don't have anything to do with peripatetic grain-purchasers who want a "sample" of wheat to exhibit to some speculator who is putting up a corner. They are frauds.

#### READY-MADE LOVE-LETTERS.

There's another class of advertisers who take advantage of susceptible natures in advertising their wares. They know very well that the tender passion finds its victims in the rural regions, and they know, too, that human nature is the same the world over. There are hundreds of young men who, having fallen in love, foolishly imagine that their success in winning



their suit depends upon addressing the object of their affections in stilted phrase, and so they cast about to find some form by which to perfect themselves in the composition of letters to their "adorable." They see an advertisement like this, for instance :

LOVE-LETTERS. 40 models free. Address  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Pub. Co., \_\_\_\_\_

And then they send for the pamphlet in question. The publishing company which promises to furnish the book, or "samples," of course forward the same, and follow it up with seductive inducements relating to certain "guides" which we will not mention here, and which they feel assured the young man will need as soon as he has consummated his matrimonial intentions.

In the first place, every young man who is in love should bear in mind this fact: He can express the peculiar sentiment of his heart much better by relying upon himself in matters of this kind, no matter how simple it may be; and, furthermore, few young ladies have an exalted idea of a young man who will resort to the labor of some one else's brain to speak his sentiments. Girls are quick to detect an imposition of this kind. Don't do it.

Then, again, you can get along after marriage much better by letting the pernicious literature of the day alone and relying for advice upon home physicians and experienced friends. Save your money, and don't squander it on trash of this description.

## OTHER ADVERTISING "CATCHES."

Then we find young men advertised for to learn telegraphy; others to learn the detective business; others to act as salesmen for a big-paying business, and so on. The place to learn telegraphy, if one intends to follow the business, is in a telegraph company's office; and they never advertise. If you want to be a detective, get into some reputable agency; they never have to advertise for men. If you desire to learn commercial business, get into a store and learn the trade from the bottom up; these are the only salesmen who ever succeed.

Above all, don't answer advertisements offering these inducements, for they are but baits to catch the anxious and unsophisticated.

## ADVERTISING DODGES.

Certain papers contain numerous small advertisements, calling for small sums of money or stamps in exchange for information that will lead to the rapid accumulation of wealth. All imaginable devices are resorted to to catch the eye of the reading public. Every illustrated newspaper, story paper, magazine and religious paper, even, contains from one to twenty-five three-line or four-line advertisements of this character:

**BIG PAY.**—Send stamp for a sure-selling article.  
Agents wanted. Address, etc.

Of late it has been found that the demand for a stamp proves injurious to the advertiser, and so one sees numerous announcements:

**F**REE.—Send name and address for our quick-selling articles. Fortunes made in the work. Address, etc.

When the correspondent replies, it is found that the house will furnish circulars, instructions and samples of “quick-selling goods” for a few dollars. These articles are generally of the most simple kind, and no person would think of traveling about the country and offering them for sale.

The fact is that the average man or woman cannot transform himself or herself into a peddler and resort to such means of gaining a living. A few of the large number sending for “samples” no doubt do make money, but that is no evidence that every one can; and the upshot of the matter is that the money invested is thrown away. A dollar or two is not missed by each victim, but the aggregate is simply enormous, when the total number of curious or overanxious correspondents is remembered.

Another class of advertisements calls for a trifling investment for some little article of household use, like a carpet-tacker, a dish-washer, a knife-sharpener, or a multiform instrument in one. The advertiser sends the article agreed upon, but when the buyer receives it, he uses it for a day or two and then throws it aside. Thousands of dollars are annually spent in this foolish way.

Sometimes the class of goods proffered are palpable frauds, but the character of the newspapers in which the advertisement appears make the affair seem all right. Men who have humbugs usually seek to advertise them in religious journals, and it is safe to say that more money has been taken out of the pockets of the country readers of such papers than would pay for the subscription over and over again. Religious newspapers are run on precisely the same plan as secular, that is, to make money; but the honest patrons of such concerns imagine that everything which is inserted in those columns is as pious and sincere as the high-toned editorials therein. The advertisements are taken by agents, and the columns are open to whoever desires to put a notice in them, provided the cash accompanies the order. Large prices are charged, because the agents know that the readers of such papers are more easily deceived by the appearance of sincerity than they would be by the same advertisement in some police newspaper.

There is also a class of semi-religious papers which find their way into the best families, largely patronized by cautious swindlers; and still another class of sensational story papers with immense circulations that accomplish a deal of harm.





## INNOCENT PURCHASERS.

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There is a doctrine laid down and enforced by the courts under the general head of "innocent purchasers," which is not altogether satisfactory. As has been very pertinently observed, it is an unjust and oppressive discrimination in favor of one class of purchasers, to the exclusion of others equally legal.

Any lawyer or judge might be challenged to give good reasons why the innocent purchaser of a drive-well, or barbed wire, is not entitled to the equal immunity or rights as a banker who purchases a raised note. The whole history of court decisions appears to be a combination with swindlers, so that the farmer is to be eternally the victim; and his labor is forever to be used to fatten the whole horde of swindling cormorants who flourish on his simplicity and artlessness. Courts can always find a precedent rendered away back in feudal times, reeking with hoary error, and enriched in antiquity by the groans and oppressions of the people.

There is, of course, no hope that the rulings of courts can be reversed; that the innocent purchasers of raised notes can recover the full amount. It is

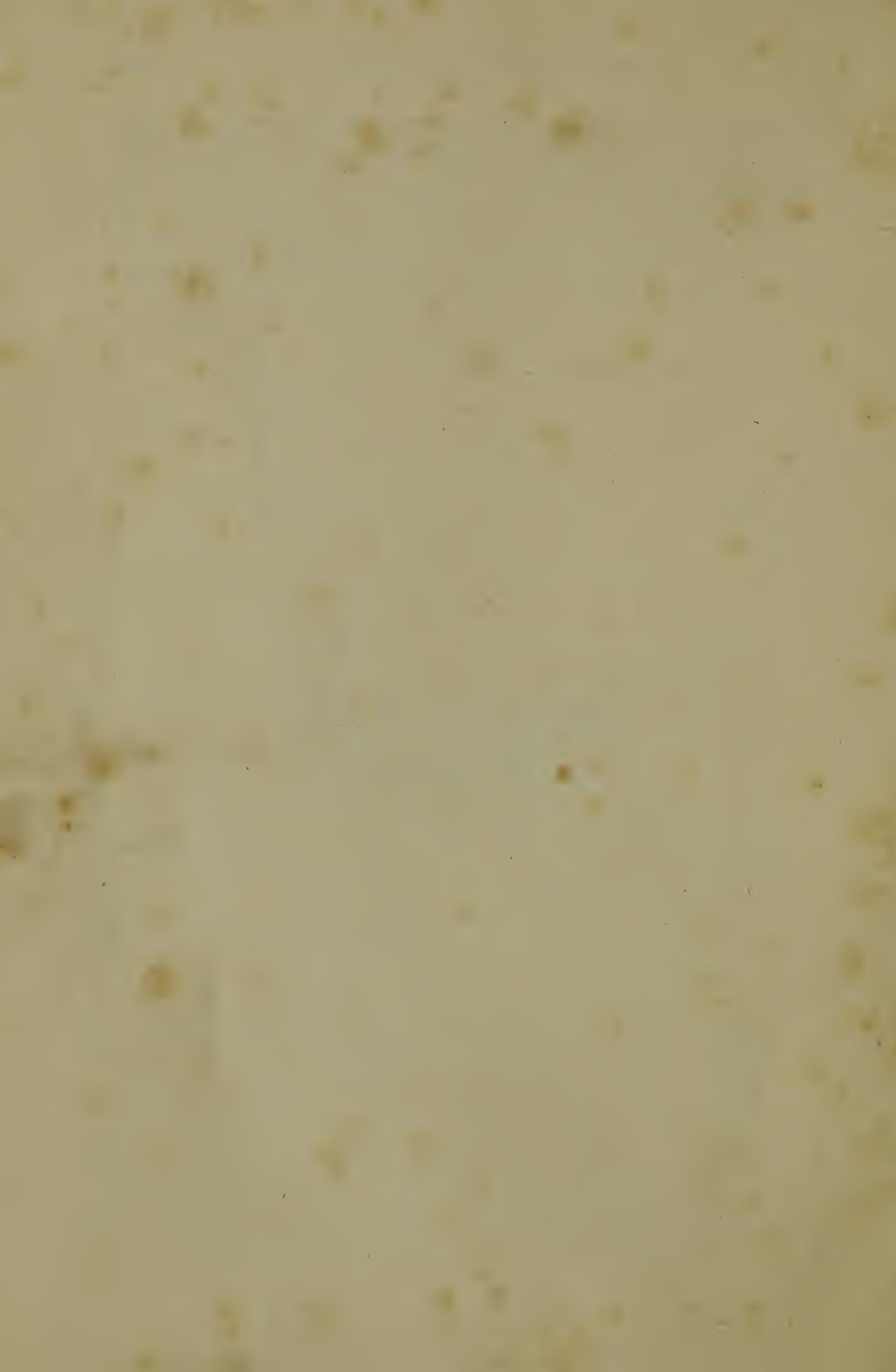
demand, however, that the same principle be applied to innocent purchasers of drive-wells and barbed wire. The whole country is aroused on this subject, and if relief cannot be had from the courts, a ground-swell will be raised among the farmer voters which will make the legal Belshazzars tremble on their thrones. There is nothing more terrible to judge or ruler than an enraged populace.

The same authority above quoted from says:

When their rights are outraged, justice denied them in courts, and they are dragged from distant parts of the country to answer to frivolous and unjust demands—when courts pander to rich monopolies until justice blushes at their iniquities—when the people, already oppressed and down-trodden, are spurned from the courts with their appeals for justice, then is the time for God to raise up a leader of the people to lead them out of bondage. Their cry will be heard. Relief will come, and it may be sooner and in a way least expected by those who now oppress them by unrighteous judgment. We understand that a law firm in Cedar Rapids have been employed to bring 1,000 suits in the District Courts of Iowa to recover damages for infringements of the drive-well royalty. Many of these are on wells in use years before the patent was granted to Green. Many of these cases are against poor farmers who cannot raise the amount demanded. Others are ignorant of the demand. On each one of these suits there will be an attorney's fee of \$20. The Marshal's, Clerk of the Court and attorneys' fees cannot be less than \$100 in each case—making \$100,000, to be paid for in corn at 15 cents a bushel or pork at \$2 per hundred. The attorneys' fees in these cases alone are \$20,000; but the Judge and the lawyer will say, "This is all right. The man who buys a piece of machinery ought to have known it was all right before he buys." Yes, but the courts protect the innocent swindler who buys the raised or forged note of the farmer; and if the courts intend to render justice or entitle themselves to the respect of the world, why not

protect the innocent purchaser of machinery, bought in the public markets, hundreds and, probably, thousands of miles away from him who holds a patent. When, oh, when, will justice, with her ever-poised wings, protect all alike—the farmer in his rural home as well as the banker in the city full? And how long will an outraged and oppressed people suffer such wrongs in silence?













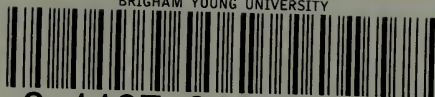








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